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A Grounded Theory Study of the Prophet Muhammad's Leadership Behaviors: A Model for Islamic School Principals

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Abstract

The Muslim population in the United States is expected to double over the next two decades. As the population grows, there will be a corresponding growth in the size and number of Islamic organizations, especially Islamic schools. Islamic schools were first established in the 1930s by the Nation of Islam and were followed by the establishment of Sunni Islamic schools in the 1970s. Islamic schools, similar to traditional schools, are operated by principals. Literature on educational leadership illustrates a vital role that principals play in schools. However, there is no Islamic educational leadership model that assists the work of principals of Islamic schools. The purpose of this study was to identify the leadership behaviors of the Prophet Muhammad and to develop an Islamic educational leadership model to aid principals operating Islamic schools in the United States. Literature on Islamic leadership, in general, is developing, and Islamic educational leadership has not yet been explored. This qualitative grounded theory study used the constant comparative method to examine a selected portion of the Sunnah. Results from the study led to the development of an emerging theory based on two core categories that emerged from the data analysis: Modeling and Directing Behaviors, and Motivating Followers to a Theocentric Worldview. The core categories, related themes, and properties are thoroughly discussed. Lastly, this dissertation discusses the implication of the findings, and makes recommendation for future studies.

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A Grounded Theory Study of the Prophet Muhammad's Leadership Behaviors: A Model
for Islamic School Principals

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of the requirements for the degree
Ed.D. in Executive Leadership

Supervised by

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St. John Fisher College

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Dedication

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

“To God we belong, and Him we shall return.” (Quran: 2:156)

Biographical Sketch

Asif I. Padela is currently the Principal of Promise Academy II Charter High School for the Harlem Children's Zone. Mr. Padela attended Stony Brook University from 2000 to 2005 and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies and History in 2004, and a Master of Arts in Teaching Social Studies in 2005. Later, in 2010 he graduated with a Master of Science in Educational Leadership and Administration from the College of Saint Rose. In the fall of 2013 he came to St. John Fisher College and began doctoral studies in the Ed.D. Program in Executive Leadership. Mr. Padela pursued his research on Islamic educational leadership under the direction of Dr. Pamela Njapa-Minyard and Dr. Roy Minnix received the Ed.D. degree in 2015.

Abstract

The Muslim population in the United States is expected to double over the next two decades. As the population grows, there will be a corresponding growth in the size and number of Islamic organizations, especially Islamic schools. Islamic schools were first established in the 1930s by the Nation of Islam and were followed by the establishment of Sunni Islamic schools in the 1970s.

Islamic schools, similar to traditional schools, are operated by principals. Literature on educational leadership illustrates a vital role that principals play in schools. However, there is no Islamic educational leadership model that assists the work of principals of Islamic schools.

The purpose of this study was to identify the leadership behaviors of the Prophet Muhammad and to develop an Islamic educational leadership model to aid principals operating Islamic schools in the United States. Literature on Islamic leadership, in general, is developing, and Islamic educational leadership has not yet been explored. This qualitative grounded theory study used the constant comparative method to examine a selected portion of the *Sunnah*.

Results from the study led to the development of an emerging theory based on two core categories that emerged from the data analysis: Modeling and Directing Behaviors, and Motivating Followers to a Theocentric Worldview. The core categories, related themes, and properties are thoroughly discussed. Lastly, this dissertation discusses the implication of the findings, and makes recommendation for future studies.

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All praise and thanks are due to Allah, none can praise Him as He deserves, for even praises of Him emanate from His Generosity. I embarked on this journey without the capacity to fulfill it, and it was His kindness that allowed for its completion. The good of this work returns to Him, and its deficiency returns to me. May the most perfect of blessings be upon His beloved, the empyrean of love, our master Muhammad.

I owe thanks to many people for helping me through this journey, my wife being foremost on the list. We trekked out to Syracuse every other weekend and on our trips back she drove as I dozed off and dreamed. I struggled through the program on a daily basis, but she pushed me to finish. Rohi, none of this would have been possible without you. May whatever good comes from this work be on your balance scale. To my children, thank you for enduring the road trips and the absentminded father. I pray that you will benefit from the *Sunnah*, both inwardly and outwardly.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

Nearly 30 years ago, The National Commission on Excellence in Education published the first *A Nation at Risk*. The report detailed challenges faced by the American educational system in a rapidly changing world (Gardner, 1983). American prosperity could no longer depend on natural resources or low skilled agricultural and industrial work. In a rapidly changing global economy, the United States is facing labor competition from other countries (Friedman, 2006), and, as a result, needs to produce a highly educated labor force. Though multiple educational reforms have taken place, statistics show there have been little to no educational gains (Weber, 2010).

Lack of higher education has a long-term impact on individuals' lives. According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics (2015), higher educational achievement is an indicator of higher wages and lower unemployment. However, high school graduation rates remain low, with almost a third of American students not completing high school (Gates & Gates, 2010). Even high school graduates struggle in college, as 41% of students pursuing a four-year college degree never finish (Kena et al., 2015).

In a climate in which educational achievement is paramount, parents are seeking schools that will provide their children with the best possible educational outcomes. Private schools remain a viable option for parents, yet they comprise 28.1% of American schools, while only serving 10% of the student population (National Center of Educational Statistics, 2014). Within the private school sector, 83% of schools are

religiously affiliated (Sander & Cohen-Zada, 2012). Because Islamic schools are aggregated under the ubiquitous category of “other religious” in statistics gathered by the National Center of Education (2014), it is difficult to determine the exact percentage of private schools are affiliated with the Islamic faith.

General studies on parental school choice identify multiple reasons parents give when opting for private religious schools. According to the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, 85% of parents believe these schools have a better learning environment, and 64.1% choose private religious schools because of religious education (Council for American Private Education, 2013). Unfortunately, no comprehensive studies have been concluded for the purpose of assessing why parents opt to send their children to Islamic schools. However, smaller studies allude to the following motivators: (a) religious education, (b) Islamic environment, (c) parental desire to pass on beliefs and culture, (d) development and preservation of children’s identity, and (e) protection from negative influences of public schools (Badawi, 2005; Hewer, 2001; Salman, 2008). In addition, Elannani (2007) found that the educational experience of student in Islamic schools realizes the idea of the common good, pluralist diversity, and democracy in American society.

Religion plays a prominent role in the United States, with 90% of Americans believing in God, and 80% holding religion to be important in their lives (Nord & Haynes, 1998). In addition, non-Christian faiths have experienced a 1.2% growth in the United States since 2007 (Pew Research Center, 2015). Nevertheless, critics of religious schools argue that they cause division within society by segregating children from the larger community and instilling prejudice. In response, proponents cite studies

demonstrating the positive impact these schools have on their children (Grace, 2003). Furthermore, such schools offer a sense of collective identity for students, parents, and school personnel (Sikkink, 2012).

Private religious schools, in general, and Islamic schools, in particular, demand leaders who are able to navigate religious and social complexities while fostering the optimal environment for school children. Within Islamic schools, educational leaders must balance the academic demands of modern education with the social, cultural, and religious demands of the Muslim community, while maintaining a profound respect for both. This juxtaposition of responsibilities and sensibilities is a significant challenge for leaders of Islamic schools operating in the United States. In post-9/11 United States, Muslims are under increasing scrutiny due to a sense of xenophobia and, more specifically, Islamophobia that seems to be spreading across the United States (Ramarajan & Runell, 2007). The term Islamophobia originated in the 1920s within the European context, it was used to describe racist attitudes and behaviors against Muslims (Sayyid, 2014). Since then, it has been adopted to describe similar behaviors with the American context (Fink, 2014; Saylor, 2014).

Islamic schools function much like their peers and are overseen by principals. Principal leadership influences the development, growth, and culture of a school (Fullan, 2014; Louis & Wahlstrom, 2011). Over the last few decades, the role of principals in the United States has evolved and expanded beyond the scope of instructional leadership. Principals are expected to manage personnel, finance, school culture, classroom instruction, as well as a myriad of other activities all while communicating with stakeholders within the community (Kimball, 2011; Lynch, 2012). Given the ever-

changing role of principals, Fullan (2002) stated, “that the principal of the future has to be much more attuned to the big picture, and much more sophisticated at conceptual thinking, and transforming the organization through people and teams” (p. 3).

Leadership studies are being conducted on principal leadership. They focus on how principal leadership affects student achievement, teacher attitudes and behavior, leadership models and job satisfaction, and other areas related to the impact of leadership on schools (Leone, Warnimont, & Zimmerman, 2009; Louis & Wahlstrom, 2011; Marzano, Waters, & McNuttly, 2005).

Even though the first Sunni Islamic school was established in the 1970s, and other Islamic schools have been in operation since the early 1900s (Memon, 2009), little research exists on principal leadership within Islamic schools. In a post-9/11 world, Muslims face an increasing number of challenges as they work to square their religious and civic identities while facing discrimination and other prejudices (Sirin & Fine, 2007; Sirin & Katsiaficas, 2011). Principals operating such schools draw on the Islamic tradition, the Quran, the word of God and the *Sunnah* (the normative practices of the Prophet Muhammad) in order to address and overcome these challenges from within an Islamic framework.

The Quran and the *Sunnah*, are the main sources of guidance for Muslims. The Prophet Muhammad plays a pivotal role in the lives of Muslims because the Quran commands Muslims to follow his example (Quran 3:31, trans. Arberry, 1996). The Prophet Muhammad is the embodiment of the Quran, and the exemplar *par excellence* (Usmani, 2009). As such, Muslim scholars have codified his *hadith* (recorded sayings, actions, and approvals) and biography. As the number of Islamic schools increase in the

United States, it will become important to have a leadership model that is grounded in the Islamic tradition, through the words and actions of the Prophet Muhammad, and also considers the nuances of educational issues that exist in the United States.

Problem Statement

Currently, there is a dearth in the literature on Islamic schools, in general, and principal leadership within Islamic schools in particular. Projections estimate that the Muslim population in the United States will more than double, growing from 2.6 million in 2010 to 6.2 million in 2030 (Grim & Karim, 2011). With the Muslim population steadily growing, Islamic schools in the United States will show a corresponding increase in number and size. Principals operating such schools will be forced to negotiate multiple roles, and draw on Islamic sources for guidance and legitimacy.

Principals play an integral role in guiding and actualizing the mission, vision, values, and goals of their schools (Leithwood, 1992). Additionally, major decisions regarding curriculum, instruction, culture, and discipline are also under the purview of the principal. Given the vital role that principals play within their schools and the increasing proportion of Islamic schools in the United States, additional exploration into leadership theory must be initiated. In this study, the researcher examined selected portions of the *Sunnah* in order to derive principles of Islamic leadership that can be applied to the educational context of Islamic schools in the United States.

Muslim scholars have paid special attention to the *Sunnah* because it represents normative practices of the Prophet Muhammad (Rahman, 1996). The *Sunnah* has been preserved by Muslim scholars in the *hadith* collections (Brown, 2006). From the very inception of Islam, the *Sunnah* was utilized by Muslims to inform their practices (Brown,

2009). This study utilized the *Sunnah* to develop a leadership theory that can advise and improve the practices of Islamic school principals in the United States.

Theoretical Rationale

Servant leadership, transformational leadership, and situational leadership theories have been widely studied in varying for profit and nonprofit environments (Gupta & Murari, 2012; Northouse, 2013). Additionally, multiple studies have evaluated their effectiveness within educational settings (Grothaus, 2004; Thompson, 2014). Within the framework of Islamic leadership, servant leadership and transformational leadership have been identified with the Prophet Muhammad's leadership style (Mir, 2010). Though these leadership models can offer insight to Islamic school principals, and do not necessarily conflict with any Islamic teachings, they are not rooted in the Islamic tradition and may not have the same credibility as a leadership theory that is grounded within the Islamic tradition and the Prophet Muhammad's *Sunnah* (Shah, 2006).

Servant leadership. Greenleaf (1977) introduced a form of leadership that challenged the norm of his time. His works emphasized that the primary intent of leaders should be to best serve those being led (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002; Smith, Montagno, & Kuzmenko, 2004). A servant leader's effectiveness would be determined by how and/if followers experience personal growth through becoming "healthier, wiser, freer, and more autonomous" (Greenleaf, 1991, pp. 13-14). A number of works have been written on the subject and have served to popularize the servant leadership style (Hesselbein, Goldsmith, Beckhard, & Schubert, 1998). Servant leadership's affiliation with historical

figures such as Jesus Christ, Mahatma Gandhi, and Mother Theresa, further bolster its popularity.

However, more empirical research must be applied in order to develop servant leadership into a sound theory (Patterson, 2003; Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002). Laub (1999), Patterson (2003), and Spears (2010) works developed a more systematic definition of servant leadership and created tools to quantify the theory. Lack of agreement on the model has not prevented people and organizations from utilizing it, or researchers from conducting qualitative and quantitative studies (Gupta & Murari, 2012; Searle & Barbuto, 2011).

Mir (2010) identified servant leadership as one of the leadership styles employed by the Prophet Muhammad. Studies conducted within an Islamic educational environment showed that it was the preferred style of leadership (Ahmad & Fontaine, 2011). However, its application was based on Muslim practitioners' Islamic values, not models drawn from Western literature on leadership (Ahmad & Ogunsola, 2011). In other words, Muslim practitioners' use of servant leadership is based on its assumed relationship to the Prophet Muhammad's leadership style.

Transformational leadership. Transformational leadership gained prominence through the work of Burns (1978), and focused on the leader-follower relationship. This leadership style is distinguished by the leader's ability to understand the followers' motivations and use them to help followers achieve success with organizational goals (Northouse, 2013). Bass (1998) added to the theory of transformational leadership by identifying pseudo-transformational leaders. These are leaders who advocate the compromise of moral integrity in order for their followers to achieve transformation. The

theory has been developed with relation to organizational theory by the work of Kouzes and Posner (2012), and in the educational field by Leithwood (1992).

AlSarhi, Salleh, Mohamed, and Amini (2014) identified the religious, social, and political transformation of the Arabian Peninsula, now considered the Middle East, through the work of the Prophet Muhammad as an example of transformational leadership in action. The Prophet Muhammad appealed to his followers and inspired them to overcome the social norms of society. In so doing, he established the religion of Islam in Arabia. However, Beekun (2012) pointed out that transformational leadership does not always coincide with the behaviors of the Prophet Muhammad.

“Transformational leaders may . . . adopt the values which they believe fit the implicit theory of leadership of their followers” (Beekun, 2012, pp. 1010). He went on to demonstrate how the Prophet Muhammad did not compromise his values, and argued for a character-centric model of leadership.

Similar to servant leadership, transformational leadership has been identified with the Prophet Muhammad’s leadership behaviors. However, there are areas where transformational leadership theory does not account for the actions of the Prophet Muhammad. More importantly for Muslim leaders, the theory is not based on the life and practice of the Prophet Muhammad, which is important within the cultural context.

Situational leadership. Servant leadership and transformational leadership theory fall under leader-centered theories, emphasizing the leader-follower dynamic (Meese & Ortmeier, 2004). Situational leadership, on the other hand, is a follower-and-context centered leadership theory (Northouse, 2013). Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson (1982) developed a leadership approach that takes into consideration issues such as: (a)

the difficulty level of the task, (b) the leader-follower relationship, (c) follower competence, and (d) follower commitment. In this scenario, the leader assesses the situation and adapts his or her leadership style to support the follower in accomplishing the task.

Situational leadership theory has not been identified as a leadership model utilized by the Prophet Muhammad. However, during the life of the Prophet Muhammad, his role changed many times. During the beginning of Islam, the Prophet Muhammad and his followers resided in Mecca and were subject to political, social, and economic oppression (Watt, 1961). The difficulties they endured eventually inspired the Prophet Muhammad and his followers to migrate to Medina. The migration to Medina led to the Prophet Muhammad being recognized as a political and religious leader in Arabia, but other tribes and cities contested his power. However, as the Muslim community gained political dominance over Mecca, the Prophet Muhammad's political leadership was solidified (Lings, 1991). The shifting nature of the Prophet Muhammad's role would require him to be flexible in his leadership style, hence the inclusion of situational leadership.

In this grounded theory study, there is an apparent dearth of literature on Islamic leadership in general, and Islamic educational leadership in particular; a specific theory was not explored. Rather, grounded theory methods were employed to investigate the behaviors of the Prophet Muhammad and develop an emerging theory of Islamic educational leadership that can be utilized by principals of Islamic school in the United States. In the process, this study helped contextualize the role of servant, transformational, and situational leadership within the framework of the Islamic tradition.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative grounded theory study was to study the leadership behaviors of the Prophet Muhammad as they apply to the educational setting of Islamic schools in the United States.

Research Questions

For this study, there are two research questions.

1. What are characteristics of the life of the Prophet Muhammad, based on the *Sunnah* that describe leadership behavior?
2. What leadership model can be derived from these characteristics that can aid principals within Islamic schools in the United States?

Significance of the Study

Literature on Islamic leadership is still emerging, and there are presently no specific models for Islamic educational leadership. This study is one of the first that was focused on developing an Islamic educational leadership model, and helps to fill the current gap that exists in the body of literature. Analysis of 1,896 *hadith* shed light on the principles, values, and ideologies by which the Prophet Muhammad led his community. Furthermore, given the nature of the Prophet Muhammad's role in his community, it became apparent that his behaviors were a manifestation of educational objectives that principals of Islamic schools need to consider as they guide and operate their schools. Understanding the leadership behaviors of the Prophet Muhammad, and the situations to which he applied them, provides crucial aid to the development of an Islamic educational leadership theory that can be utilized by Islamic school principals in the United States.

Definitions of Terms

Amana – Arabic for trust

Asabiya – a pre-Islamic term that was utilized to indicate a person's loyalty to their family and tribe (After the advent of Islam, it was utilized to mean loyalty to God.)

Aqly – rational sources of knowledge

Daeef – a term used to denote that a *hadith* is at a low level of authenticity

Deen – a comprehensive way of life based on the principles of Islam

Fitra – a term used to denote a person's natural disposition

Hadith – the specific sayings, actions, and approvals attributed to the Prophet Muhammad

Hassan – term used to denote a *hadith* is authentic, but not at the highest level of authenticity

Haqooq Allah – the rights of God over humanity

Haqooq-ul-Abad – the rights of humanity over each other

Hijab – headscarf

Ijma – consensus

Imam – Arabic term used to denote a religious leader

Iman – faith

Ihsan – Islamic spirituality

Jihad – Struggling in the way of God

Kalam – a term often used to denote Islamic theological discourse

Khalifa – a term employed in the Quran denoting God's representatives in the world

Khulifa al-rashideen – Arabic term that refers to the “rightly guided caliphs” Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali

Madrassah – an institution for the study of Islamic theology and religious law

Qiyas – analogy

Sahih – term used to denote the highest level of *hadith* authenticity

Shura – Arabic term meaning consultation

Shariah – literally the term means “a way to the watering well,” but often used to refer to Islamic law

Sunnah – the aggregate way for viewing the words, actions, and approvals of the Prophet Muhammad

Tasawwuf – the science of Islamic spirituality

Tawhid – a theological term used to denote the absolute oneness of God

Ummah – a term used to identify the Muslim community

Ummi – a person that is unable to read or write

Chapter Summary

This chapter provides the rationale for exploring the Prophet Muhammad’s leadership behaviors as a way to develop an Islamic educational leadership theory that can be used by principals of Islamic schools in the United States. Additionally, this chapter outlines the theoretical framework, purpose, significance, and research questions of this study. Lastly, terms related to the research are defined.

Chapter 2 summarizes literature related to Muslims in the United States, Islamic religious context, Islamic educational philosophy and practice, Islamic schools in the United States, importance of leadership in schools, Islamic and Western leadership, and

the Prophet Muhammad and the principles of Islamic leadership. In this chapter, I contextualize the Islamic leadership and prioritize the challenges of Islamic schools in the United States.

Chapter 3 focuses on the methodology and procedures that were used in the study. It identifies classical grounded theory as the qualitative approach utilized to develop an Islamic educational leadership theory, which can, then, be applied to Islamic schools in the United States. Additionally, it provides rationale for the use of *hadith* as a data source, and explores the connection between grounded theory and hermeneutics.

Chapter 4 reports on the findings from the constant comparative data analysis method. The two core concepts, related themes, and properties are explored in detail. Lastly, in Chapter 5, the findings reported in Chapter 4 are discussed with relation to current research. Limitations of the study are discussed and suggestions are made for future research.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Introduction and Purpose

In order to understand the context of educational leadership from an Islamic perspective, and its applicability to Islamic schools in the United States, this chapter examines literature related to: (a) Muslims in the United States, (b) Islamic religious context, (c) Islamic educational philosophy and practice, (d) Islamic schools in the United States, (e) the importance of leadership in schools, (f) Islamic leadership and Western leadership, and (g) the Prophet Muhammad and the principles of Islamic leadership.

Muslims in the United States

In order for a meaningful and useful understanding of Islam in the United States to occur, Islam must be viewed within the context of its development in and alongside America. Literature on the history of Islam in the United States is growing. Broadly speaking, the American Muslim community can be divided into indigenous and immigrant peoples (Jackson, 2005; Nyang, 1999).

Indigenous Muslims. African American Muslims are considered indigenous because the slave trade forced their migration to the United States (Haddad, 1986; Jackson, 2005). Estimates project that a third of African slaves brought to the Americas were Muslim (Diouf, 1998). Historical records show that some African Muslims preserved their religion and culture, and even earned their freedom (Alford, 2007; Austin, 2012; Said, 2011). However, in most cases, a slave's connection to Islam and any other historical roots was severed (Berg, 2005).

During the 1900s, African American Islam became prominent with the rise of the Moorish Science Temple of America and the Nation of Islam, both groups gaining

followers through a process of conversion. Their views differed widely from “orthodox” Islam, here meaning Sunni Islam (Langer & Simon, 2008). Both groups affirm that their leader was the last prophet, essentially negating a basic tenet of Islam, that the Prophet Muhammad was the last and final prophet (Berg, 2005; Maghnisawi, 2007; McCloud, 1995).

Sunni Islam appeared within the African American community during the civil rights movement and has spread through the efforts of various movements and preachers. The conversion of prominent members of the Nation of Islam, Malcolm X and Muhammad Ali, marked a shift in African American Islam towards orthodox Sunni beliefs (Jackson, 2005; X & Haley, 1992). After the death of Elijah Muhammad, the Nation of Islam split into two factions, one led by Minister Louis Farakhan and the other by Imam Warith Deen Muhammad.

Imam Warith Deen Muhammad, the son of Elijah Muhammad, disregarded the doctrines espoused by the Nation of Islam and adopted orthodox beliefs held by Sunni Muslims (Jackson, 2005). As a result of this seismic shift, many followers left the Nation of Islam and joined Imam Warith Deen’s newly formed American Society of Muslims (Berg, 2005; Jackson, 2005). Sunni Islam continued to spread through the African American community as African American Muslims went to study Islam in Saudi Arabia, leading to the rise and growth of the Salafi movement. Sunni Islam has also spread into the community through the propagation of Sufi orders that stress the spiritual aspects of the Islamic faith (Chande, 2008).

Immigrant Muslims. Immigrants populated the United States in multiple stages, as supported by research that indicates Turkish and Moorish settlers came to establish the

English colony of Roanoke in 1586 (Abd-Allah, 2010). However, no such research can be found to suggest that these Muslims were able to develop and sustain their religious and/or cultural heritage. Muslim immigrants from the 1800s and onward began to develop systems in order to ensure the preservation of their religion.

The first wave of Muslim immigrants came primarily from Syria in the late 1800s and early 1900s (Curtis IV, 2009). During this period, Syrian Muslims practiced their faith within the confines of their home and established cemeteries. However, by the 1930s, many stopped identifying themselves as Muslims and integrated into their local communities (Curtis IV, 2009). In the second wave, Bosnian and Albanian Muslims migrated between World War I and World War II. In an effort to preserve their faith, they established mosques, *Sufi* lodges, and burial grounds (Curtis IV, 2009). The last wave of immigration started in 1967 and continues to the present time (Ghazali, 2004; Jackson, 2005; Nyang, 1999). South Asians, Chinese, Malaysian, Middle Eastern, and other Muslims from around the globe continue to migrate to the United States. After settling in the United States, Muslims developed institutions that reflected their social, cultural, and religious needs.

Over the last century, the Muslim population has grown and diversified, with projections estimating that the population will more than double in the United States in the next two decades (Timani, 2006). Though the estimated population of Muslims in the United States varies, the Pew Research Center's (2007) study indicates that there are approximately 2.35 million adult Muslims living in the United States, not including children and undocumented Muslims. The Pew Research Center's (2007) study notes that, according to other sources, such as Britannica, the Muslim population in the United

States could be at seven million. Despite the challenge of obtaining an accurate number of Muslims living in America, there is an increasing amount of Islamic organizations, more than 4000 to date, ranging from mosques to food pantries (Al-Islam, 2006).

Muslims first established houses of worship to fulfill their religious obligations and then created schools and community centers to further support their religious and cultural identity (Nyang, 1999).

The Nation of Islam established the first Islamic schools in the United States in the 1930s. Later, in the 1970s, the first full-time Sunni Islamic school was established and the number of Islamic schools operating in the United States has been increasing ever since (Memon, 2009). In keeping pace with the many iterations of Islam in America, American Muslims have created multiple types of Islamic schools: part-time, full-time, and traditional *madrassahs*. Keyworth's (2011) extensive study of Islamic schools in the United States concluded that there are 235 Islamic schools in operation. She emphasized that "no national studies other than the Islamic Society of North America study and this study are known to have been conducted" (p. 5).

Islamic schools operate in a specific socio-cultural system that is informed by the beliefs and values promoted by the Islamic faith. People working and attending such schools face challenges that are not the norm in United States public schools. Multiple studies highlight challenges that Islamic schools and Muslim students face, such as balancing their religious and national identity, navigating their citizenship, and transitioning to environments that are not religiously or culturally familiar (Berglund, 2011; Elannani, 2013; Saada, 2013; Sirin & Fine, 2007; Sirin, Ryce, & Mir, 2009;).

The Islamic worldview informs the way these schools operate from a philosophical and practical point of view. Studies of these schools demonstrate that Muslim educators and administrators seek to utilize Islamic teaching in order to navigate faith-based and civic responsibilities. Interviews from these studies demonstrated that students, teachers, and administrators feel that their schools provide students with the tools to grow as good Muslims and citizens (Elannani, 2013; Saada, 2013). However, Islamic schools have come under scrutiny and may face greater challenges given the rise of Islamophobia in the United States (Ali, 2012; Ramarajan & Runell, 2007).

Islamic Religious Context

The Prophet Muhammad was born in 570 C.E. in the city of Mecca on the Arabian Peninsula (Armstrong, 2006). During this time period, pagan beliefs dominated Arabia and tribal affiliation was central to one's survival and well-being. Not much is known about the Prophet Muhammad's life prior to prophet-hood. Records maintain he was a nobleman known for his trustworthy and honorable nature (Aslan, 2011). At the age of 40, his life changed dramatically when he encountered the archangel Gabriel and became the recipient of God's words (Rahman, 2002). This event in the Prophet's life marked the start of the Islamic faith, and, according to Islamic thought, a continuation of the primordial religion of Islam (Nasr, 1999).

For Muslims, Islam is *the* primordial faith sent down to mankind from the time of Adam (Nasr, 1999). In its broadest sense, the word Islam means to submit to God's will (Chittick & Murata, 1994). However, a more restrictive usage refers specifically to the religion established by the Prophet Muhammad (Murata, 1992). Scholars differentiate between these two meanings by utilizing the word *islam* for the former and Islam for the

later (Chittick and Murata, 1994; Mawdudi, 2013). From a historical perspective, Muslims believe that all the prophets were sent down with the same theological message, which is the divine unity of God (*tawhid*). All prophets were in a state of submission to God and were considered to be Muslims. Prophet-hood, from an Islamic perspective, culminated with the Prophet Muhammad, the seal of the prophets and the bearer of the final revelation (Aslan, 2011; Nasr, 2002).

The religion of Islam brought, through the Prophet Muhammad, a holistic way of living (*din*). *Din*, often translated as “religion,” has multiple meanings (Chittick & Murata, 1994). One prominent definition being, “the way of life commanded by God to be revealed by the Prophets to mankind” (Brohi, 1980, p. 94). To the amazement of some of Muhammad’s contemporaries, he even taught his companions proper bathroom etiquette (Katz, 2002).

As Islamic thought developed, Muslim scholars utilized a three-dimensional way of explaining the faith, with each dimension pertaining to a different aspect of humanity (Chittick & Murata, 1994). In the famous *hadith* of Gabriel, the Prophet Muhammad articulated the five pillars of Islam, the articles of belief (*iman*), and the spiritual path (*ihsan*) (Nasr, 2002). Three distinctive, yet interrelated, disciplines arose from this *hadith*. The science of Islamic law, often translated as *shariah*, arose to govern the outward behavior of Muslims (Kamali, 2008). The science of Islamic theology, *kalam*, focused on a systematized way of understanding God, prophet-hood, and eschatology (Chittick & Murata, 1994). Lastly, the science of Islamic spirituality, *tasawwuf*, which was developed to guide Muslims to be in the presence of God (Schimmel, 1978). These

three dimensions of Islam guide and inform the overall objectives of Islamic education in order to enrich the mind, body, and soul of the Muslim American student.

Islamic Educational Philosophy and Practice

In the early years of Islam, the Prophet Muhammad emphasized the importance of education. Though the Arabian Peninsula had a rich oral tradition, literacy was not common (Arberry, 1967). The Prophet Muhammad was an *ummi* (a person that could not read or write), but encouraged his followers to learn reading, writing, and new languages (Ghuddah, 2003). A portion of the Prophet's mosque was composed of Muslims who were specifically dedicated to learning. Henceforth, the acquisition of knowledge was intimately tied to mosques, which became the first Islamic universities (Lahmar, 2011).

While the Islamic civilization fostered a culture of learning and built educational institutions, little has been written on Islamic educational philosophy, as it is known in the West. Halstead (2004) ascribed the minimal research to Muslims attributing cultural baggage to the term philosophy, and credits Abu Hamid al-Ghazali's book *The Incoherence of the Philosophers* as being the final blow to philosophical thought in the Muslim world. However, *The Incoherence of the Philosophers* was written to argue against Greek and Neo-platonic metaphysics, and advocated for a balance between mysticism and jurisprudence (Netton, n.d.). Multiple philosophical works were written during, and after, al-Ghazali's lifetime.

Muslim thinkers challenged the ideals championed within the Western educational system and approached educational thought in multiple ways (Noaparast, 2014). Treatises were written on the proper conduct of teachers and students, refinement of character, and the purpose of seeking knowledge (Cook, 2010). A central theme of

early works was preserving the *fitrah*, (the natural disposition) and strengthening one's faith (Lahmar, 2011). It was not until the late 1970s that Muslim thinkers began to engage in the work of developing an educational philosophy as a response to Western cultural and intellectual hegemony (Daud, 1998).

Islamization of knowledge. Since the 18th century, Muslims have grappled with the fall of the Islamic empire and with western hegemony (Hodgson, 1974). Colonialism led to the political, social, and intellectual domination over many areas previously under the Islamic and Ottoman Empire's rule (Hodgson, 1974). Political and religious leaders, such as Shah Waliullah, Mohammad Abduh, Muhammad Iqbal, Jamaluddin al Afghani, Hasan al-Banna, Syed Abdul A'la Mawdudi, and others sought to revive the Muslim community through their political, social, and intellectual work (Siddiqi, 2011). As time passed, two distinct trends appeared, with one group of Muslims seeking to assimilate western values, and another attempting to liberate themselves from western hegemony through an "epistemological revolution" (Hashim & Rossidy, 2000, p. 21).

Western hegemony extended to educational theory, practice, and policy. Starting in the 1970s, Muslim intellectuals began addressing these intellectual challenges (Daud, 1998). The diffusion of secularism and other Western values was considered to be antithetical to the Islamic worldview (Nasr & Jahanbegloo, 2010), and multiple works were published critiquing modernity and secularism (Al-Attas, 1993; Al-Faruqi, 1982; Nasr, 2000).

Further illustrating the seriousness with which Muslims were pursuing educational reform, the First World Conference on Muslim education was held in Mecca in 1977 and focused on the Islamic tradition's approach to knowledge. Discourse on

Islamic education revolves around the Quran, the *Sunnah*, and the practice of the early Muslim community (Diallo, 2012). During this conference, the concept of the Islamization of knowledge was first articulated as a way to address the educational needs of Muslims (Al-Attas, 1993). Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas and Isma'il Faruqi are the leading researchers of the concept of Islamization of knowledge (Al-Attas, 1993; Al-Faruqi, 1982), though Al-Attas claims to be the founder (Al-Attas, 1980; Daud, 1998; Kamil, 2013). Since the initial conference in Mecca, there have been eight world conferences on Islamic education and multiple developments in the field of Islamic education (Adebayo, 2012).

According to proponents of Islamization, knowledge is not neutral and abstract; it is infused with the character and personality of a civilization (Al-Attas, 1993; Hashim & Rossidy, 2000). In other words, the Islamic tradition and civilization inform how Muslims view knowledge and education. For Muslims living in the United States, it means reconciling their transnational religious identity with their local, national, and international identity (Saada, 2013). As a result of this internal negotiation, American Muslims are in a position wherein they draw on the Islamic worldview in order to inform their educational outlook, while simultaneously trying to assimilate the outlook for their country (Asani, 2005).

The Islamic concept of knowledge also impacts how Muslim educators approach teaching and learning. Islamic education explores knowledge through a theocentric worldview because all knowledge is connected back to God (Iqbal, 2013). Hewer (2001), in his discussion on curriculum, noted that Islamic principles do not distinguish between secular and religious subjects. Therefore, Muslim educators teach in a manner that brings

the secular into the sacred (Nasr & Jahanbegloo, 2010). Accordingly, Muslims that explore the interplay between Islam and science tend to not see a conflict between the two, unlike their Christian counterparts (Bigliardi, 2014).

The ultimate goal of education in Islam is to provide Muslims with knowledge that will enable them to fulfill their covenant with God (Iqbal, 2013). Such knowledge is derived from the Quran and the *Sunnah*, and is obligatory for Muslims to attain. The secondary goal of Islamic education is to provide students pragmatic knowledge that will enable them to take on other communal obligations. For example, studying medicine to serve the medical needs of the community, learning a trade to support one's family, and so forth (Al-Attas, 1993). From this point of view, education includes the process of instilling education, the content being instilled, and its recipient (Al-Attas, 1980).

Literature on Islamic schools chronicle the many challenges that educators have faced while attempting to balance the Islamic worldview with their historical circumstances. Educators, administrators, teachers, and students all struggle and adapt to leading, teaching, and learning within the contexts of American Islamic schools (Ahmed, Clauss, & Salvaterra, 2013). Key issues that come to the surface revolve around identity formation, roles as citizens, and negotiating leadership challenges (Elannani, 2007, 2013).

Islamic Schools in the United States: School Choice and Developing Identity

Islamic schools provide an education that is based on an Islamic worldview, along with an environment conducive to Islamic morals and ethics. Though a majority of American Muslim parents send their children to public schools, the demand for Islamic schools is increasing (Keyworth, 2011). Advocates of Islamic schools attest that the

environment is conducive to practicing the Islamic faith. A variety of religious practices can be observed in Islamic schools, including, but not limited to the following: appropriate interaction between genders, conformity to Islamic dietary requirements, congregational prayer, and observance and celebration of Islamic holidays, etc. (Merry, 2006). These activities are designed to foster a connection with community (Badawi, 2005; Elannani, 2013).

In order to increase understanding on the issue, Merry's (2006) qualitative study found three reasons parents chose to send their children to Islamic schools: (a) religion, (b) academics, and (c) culture. Religiously motivated Muslim parents believe that Islamic schools provide students with an atmosphere that promotes Islamic values, and develops an understanding and appreciation of Islam. Secular and Eurocentric public schools are considered to have a negative impact on the social, cultural, and religious upbringing of Muslim children, whereas a positive Islamic environment preserves their faith and heritage while interacting in the greater American society.

Islamic schools also provide Muslim students with an environment that allows engagement in cultural practices that are manifestations of their heritage, which is an important topic for an increasingly diverse Muslim parent community. In public schools, these cultural and/or religious practices can be suppressed by "socially enforced norms" (Zine, 2007, p. 77), resulting in a negative effect on child development. Wearing the *hijab*, for example, is a way for Muslim girls to express their religious commitment. However, the practice of wearing a headscarf goes against the dominant American culture, and can be a cause for Muslims girls to be harassed (Kassissieh, 2005). For Muslim girls in the United States the choice to wear the *hijab* "holds religious

significance and acts as a reminder of Islamic principles” (Kassissieh, 2005, p. 92). Students in Zine’s (2007) study reported feeling more comfortable in Islamic schools because the schools provided a “greater sense of belonging” (Zine, 2007, p. 76). One student reported that she could finally bring the food she ate at home to school. These comforts were made possible because of a shared cultural awareness between teachers and students.

Muslim students are challenged with negotiating multiple allegiances to faith, culture, and nationality. Accordingly, educators that work with such students must consider these allegiances when making requests of these students. A lack of adequate teacher training and experience can have a negative impact on student performance. Sirin, Ryce, and Mir (2009) conducted a quantitative study comparing how teachers’ values affected their evaluation of students from immigrant backgrounds. For the study, 191 first grade students and parents, and 39 teachers were selected (23 from public schools and 16 from Islamic schools). Teachers rated students for academic competence and behavioral problems. Citing prior research, Sirin et al. (2009) highlight that teacher’s limited experience with other cultures can lead to “negative educational and psychological outcomes in children” (Sirin et al., 2009, p. 464).

Their findings confirmed prior research and added a new dimension that showed Islamic schools teachers did not have the same bias as public school teachers, that they held higher literacy and math expectations for their students in comparison to public school teachers of Muslim students and non-Muslim students. Islamic school teachers’ expectations remained relatively stable when perceived value differences increase (Sirin et al., 2009). Studies such as these suggest that Islamic schools provide an environment

that complements students' religious and cultural values, while providing appropriate educational standards.

Developing identity. A person's identity is developed over time through a lifetime of experiences. Parental choice regarding the type of schools their children attend has significant impact on the social atmosphere to which the children will be exposed. A common theme in the literature on Islamic schools was the development of students' identities and balancing between their religious affiliation and citizenship. (Clauss et al., 2013; Elannani, 2013). Islam is a transnational religion; adherents represent multiple ethnic and racial backgrounds. The American-Muslim polity is composed of foreign born, native, and convert Muslims (Pew Research Center, 2007). For American-Muslims, the question around identity became more prominent after the terrorists' attack in the United States on September 11, 2001, also known as 9/11. Hate crimes against Muslims rose sharply and Muslims reported that it was becoming harder to practice their faith openly in America (Sirin & Katsiaficas, 2011).

The Prophet Muhammad established a sense of communal identity through the concept of an *ummah* (Watt, 1961). Early converts to Islam found themselves stripped of their tribal affiliations, which was an integral part of their identity. Tribal affiliation once determined how a person was treated, the types of work they engaged in, and other important aspects of life. By openly converting to Islam, many early converts were disowned by their clansmen (Lings, 1991). When the Prophet Muhammad called people to embrace Islam, he initiated a new form of affiliation based on faith, and the concept of the *ummah* was born (Kamali, 2008). "The religion of Islam is dedicated to the ideal of

one *ummah*, or overall community, with no boundaries of race or ethnic identities” (Haddad, Smith, & Esposito, 2003, p. 203).

Table 2.1

Muslim Population in the United States

Portion who are	Total %
Foreign-born Muslims	65
Arab Region	24
Pakistan	8
Other South Asia	10
Iran	8
Europe	5
Other Africa	4
Other	6
Native-born Muslims	35
African American	20
Other	15

Note. Adapted from “Muslim Americans Middle Class and Mostly Mainstream,” by Pew Research Center, 2007, p. 1. Copyright 2007 by the Pew Research Center.

Citizenship is a relatively new concept for Muslims (Kamali, 2009). Historically, it became applicable after the downfall the Ottoman Empire and the creation of nation-states in Muslim lands. Many immigrant Muslims come from countries that were established in the 1940s (Esposito, 1998). The concept of citizenship is complex, with multiple definitions and frameworks to be respected and considered (Saada, 2013).

Kamali (2009) explored how Muslims have dealt with the idea of citizenship, and notes

that certain aspects of citizenship are not compatible with the “basic tenants of Islam on equality and justice” (p. 121). This incompatibility presents a challenge for Muslim educators as they help students develop their identity, and balance their faith and citizenship.

This challenge manifested itself in Saada’s (2013) qualitative multiple case study that examined four social studies teachers’ perspectives on citizenship education in Islamic schools. In particular, the study examined the concept of cultural citizenship, which “describes the needs of minority students and students of color to be integrated into the larger society without losing their own particular and cultural identities” (p. 250). More specifically, social studies teachers in Islamic schools faced multiple challenges when teaching their students. Three dilemmas were identified: (a) balancing education for Islamic and American identities, (b) the contention between moral absolutism and moral pluralism, and (c) tensions between national and transnational identities.

Findings of the study demonstrated that these teachers struggled to help students achieve balance between their Islamic and American identities in a post-9/11 world. The concept of nationalism ran contrary to the concept of an *ummah*, which emphasizes the religious bond between Muslims (Kamali, 2009). In order to facilitate student identification with the *ummah*, the teachers’ curricula reflected materials that were designed to help Muslim students identify with Muslims in other parts of the world (Saada, 2013). Students felt confused when American foreign policy led to interventions in Muslim countries. Teachers shared their personal stories about identity to help students negotiate the conflict (Saada, 2013). They focused on personalizing learning

experiences and had students participate in local activities and engage in advocacy as a way of promoting their civic identity (Saada, 2013).

Clauss et al. (2013) qualitative study confirmed that students in Islamic schools struggle with developing their identities. However, they found that students felt that their religion helped create in them a sense of balance. Participants for the study included administrators, teachers, parents, and former students of two Islamic schools in the United States (Clauss et al., 2013). Findings revealed that these Islamic schools assisted in the development of their Islamic and American identity. Former students recalled how teachers and administrators explicitly guided students on how to interact in society and balance their faith (Clauss et al., 2013). Administrators, teachers and students articulated a desire to engage in the larger American society through community-based activities (Clauss et al., 2013). Much of the character-building component of the school revolved around actualizing the faith and being role models in society.

Findings from Elannani's (2013) qualitative study of three Islamic schools in the United States revealed many similarities with the Clauss et al. (2013) study. Elannani's (2013) study investigated how three Islamic schools in a large American city educated students to be good Muslims and American citizens. Twenty-eight participants took part in the study and included teachers, administrators, and board members. Three of four themes identified in the study related to identity: (a) duality of goals, (b) religious pluralism, and (c) citizenship. Observations and interviews revealed that these schools adopted educational programs that fostered faith development and provided students with instruction to meet state standards (Elannani, 2013). Similar to the aforementioned studies, participants navigated issues related to the dual goal for instilling Islamic values

and fostering civic mindedness (Elannani, 2013). At times, teachers felt that the schools emphasized secular subjects over Islamic studies. Administrators, on the other hand, felt that the schools provided students with a conducive Islamic environment (Elannani, 2013). The different perspectives may be attributed to the curriculum not being integrated in a manner that brings both goals together.

The rise of Islamophobia in the United States has altered how Muslims view themselves in relation to their faith and citizenship. Muslims living in the U.S. as citizens are perceived as possible threats (Mamdani, 2004), and have been subject to surveillance, detention, and deportation (Sirin & Fine, 2007). Muslim youth revealed that they are subject to increased racism that has altered the way they behave inside and outside of school. Participants in Sirin and Fine's (2007) study stated they refrained from participating in class discussions out of fear of persecution, and that even their artistic work demonstrated the challenge of being Muslim while American.

The United States is a pluralistic society that is home to multiple cultures and faiths (Eck, 2001). In the aforementioned studies, Islamic schools helped prepare students to negotiate the religious diversity they would encounter in society (Elannani, 2007; Saada, 2013). In an effort to help students with identity development, schools hosted activities to bolster civic participation (Elannani, 2007; Saada, 2013). The structure and function of these school activities is directly impacted by the principals in charge of the school.

The Importance of Leadership in Schools

Research conducted over the last decade indicates that principal leadership exerts a significant impact on school operations (Whitaker, 2011). Principals' behaviors have

been connected to student outcomes, school vision, cultivation of leadership, and improving instruction (Baroletti & Connelly, 2013). Their interactions with teachers, students, and the community influence the school's direction and functions. The leadership style of principals affects a school's culture and can potentially transform how a school functions (Louis & Wahlstrom, 2011).

Successful principals set the direction of the school by creating a sense of common purpose and fostering agreement on short terms goals (Leithwood, 2005). Within Islamic schools this means developing a shared vision around the purpose and function of education. Currently there are no preparation programs in the United States for Islamic School teachers, thus leaving the onus on principals to provide information on Islamic educational philosophy and practice (Memon, 2011).

In addition to setting the direction, principals foster growth within their staff by providing support, modeling the way, and being visible and accessible (Leithwood, 2005). Their support role is key to building a school's instructional capacity (Fullan, 2002). Within public schools, a school's instructional capacity is measured by literacy and numeracy. Though these are important factors in assessing student preparation for high school graduation, they are not the only indicators for Islamic schools. Within Islamic schools, instruction has a moral and religious focus. For Islamic school principals, developing teachers includes fostering an understanding of the purpose and function of knowledge.

Islamic Leadership and Western Leadership

Discussions about leadership can be traced back to pre-modern times. In the last 40 years, leadership discourse in the United States has been reframed and multiple

leadership theories have been developed. Early leadership studies focused on trait-based theories, causing researchers to try and identify the specific character traits of successful leaders. Later, discourse shifted to a behavior based model, emphasizing that leadership skills can be taught and learned (Northouse, 2013). More recently, researchers have noted how contextual factors, such as social expectation, political context, and organizational challenges can influence theories and practices (Dimmock & Walker, 2000). This section examines the Islamic and Western paradigms for leadership.

From the Islamic perspective, humans were created to be the vice-regents (*khalifa*) of God; their sole purpose being to worship God (Al-Attas, 1993; Beekun & Badawi, 2005). Worship is manifested when any action is taken to draw closer to God as long as the action conforms to Islamic law (Chittick, 2007). Engaging in leadership, from this perspective, is a form of worship.

Leaders seeking to apply the principles of Islam in their leadership style must utilize the *Sunnah* as a reference (AlSarhi et al., 2014). According to the *Sunnah*, leadership is an *amana* (trust) that makes leaders accountable to God and humanity (Beekun & Badawi, 2005). This dual nature is framed in Islam through the concept of *Haqooq Allah* (the rights of God over humanity) and *Haqooq-ul-Abad* (the rights of humanity over each other) (Mir, 2010).

Early Muslim thinkers identified leadership traits, but did not construct leadership theories or models (Ali, 2012; Sidani, 2008). Their method focused on a “faith-based approach for conduct and governance” (Ali, 2012, p. 95). Increased interest in Islamic leadership has resulted in two methods of advancing Islamic leadership models: examining Islamic sources to derive a theory and adapting current leadership models into

the Islamic context (Beekun & Badawi, 1999). These two approaches will be elaborated on later in the chapter.

Western discourse has produced multiple theories of leadership (Northouse, 2013). Researchers continually examine how different models are utilized in a variety of work contexts (Lussier & Achua, 2015). Within a Western leadership framework, there are discussions on value based leadership. Spiritual leadership, servant leadership, and transformational leadership are prominent value-based leadership theories.

There has been increasing interest in spiritual leadership within the organizational context. Crossman (2010) examined how spiritual leadership relates to value based leadership theories such as servant leadership and transformational leadership. His research highlights scholarly disagreement between the definition of spirituality and religion. Spirituality is considered to be a personal private experience, whereas religion is informed by tradition, scripture, and institution (Crossman, 2010). The Western paradigm of leadership is not founded on religious values and beliefs, and a dichotomy between spirituality and religion is necessary. Within a framework of Islamic thought spirituality and religion are interwoven and interconnected.

The Prophet Muhammad and the Principles of Islamic Leadership

Islam has two primary sources the Quran and the *Sunnah*. Both sources are considered to be a type of revelation (AlSarhi et al., 2014; Beekun & Badawi, 1999). God's word, the Quran, is distinguished from the *Sunnah* epistemologically and historically. Epistemologically the Quran has a stronger position than the *Sunnah*, because it is the word of God (Usmani, 2009). However, the *Sunnah* is the lived application of the Quran. Historically Muslims scholars agree that the Quran is preserved

verbatim from the time of the Prophet Muhammad (Mattson, 2008). The authenticity of the *Sunnah*, however, has been challenged at different times. Decades after the Prophet Muhammad passed away the science of *hadith* developed and categorized *hadith* based on their strength: *sahih* (accurate), *hasan* (reliable), *daeef* (less than reliable) (Almoharby & Neal, 2013; Brown, 2011).

In addition to revealed sources, the Islamic tradition recognizes rationally derived sources of information, or *aqli* sources. AlSarhi et al. (2014) placed theories of leadership under *aqli* sources because they are developed through rational inquiry. A review of literature on Islamic leadership brought to light additional sources that could be used to guide discourse on leadership: *shura* (consultation), *asabiya* (loyalty), the example of the *khulifa al-rashedeen* (Rightly Guided Caliphs), *qiyas* (analogy), *ijma* (consensus) (Almohraby & Neal, 2013; Beekun & Badawi, 1999; Mir, 2010).

Multiple authors identified *shura* as an important principle in Islamic leadership (Almohrady & Neal, 2013; Beekun & Badawi, 1999). *Shura*, leadership by consultation, was a practice in pre-Islamic Arabia and has been affirmed by the Quran (AlSarhi et al., 2014). Kamali (2010) interpreted the Quranic verse related to *shura* as an indication that Muslim leaders should maintain a healthy relationship with their constituents. Given the definition of the term *shura*, and its affirmation in the Quran and *Sunnah*, it is an important behavior for Muslim leaders to apply. However, *shura* is not a source of information that can be utilized to derive leadership theory.

Ibn Khaldun is considered to be the father of eastern sociology, and in his seminal work, *Muqaddimah*, he posited that leadership cannot emerge without people creating a sense of collective belonging (Sidani, 2008). This collective belonging was termed

asabiya in pre-Islamic Arabia and referred to a person's loyalty to kin and tribe. *Asabiya* plays a prominent role in the Middle East and Islamic culture. Sidani (2008) noted that leadership studies often neglect the importance of *asabiya* in the Middle East, where the emergence of leadership is often aided by a person's familial relations. Almoharby and Neal's (2013) exploration of the term highlights that, through Islam, the concept shifted from loyalty to kin, to loyalty towards God. Aside from demonstrating the importance of *asabiya* neither works explored how the concept could be utilized to derive a theory on Islamic leadership.

Hadith literature validates the emulation of the *khulifa al-rashedeen*, rightly guided caliphs. The Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said, "keep to my *Sunnah* and to the *Sunnah* of the *Khulafa ar-Rashideen* (the rightly guided caliphs)," (*Arbeen al-Nawawi*, Hadith 28). For the purpose of this study, since it is focused on the leadership behaviors of the Prophet Muhammad, will omit the practices of the *khulifa al-rasheed*.

Beekun and Badawi (2005) identified *qiyas* (analogy) and *ijma* (consensus) as potential sources. *Qiyas*, linguistically and technically, is not a primary source. Muslim jurists use the term to denote making an analogy from the *Sunnah* and applying it to a new event (Nyazee, 2006). Similarly, *ijma* (consensus) linguistically denotes when a group of people agree to something, its technical definition relates to determining if the scholars of a time agree on a particular religious matter. Both *qiyas* and *ijma* have a definitive role in the Islamic legal system, but do not methodologically fit the needs of a grounded theory study.

Table 2.2

Islamic Leadership Attributes

Attributes of Leaders	Mir (2010)	Abbasi et al.	Ali (2009)	Almoharby & Neal (2013)	Beekun & Badawi (1999)	Beekun (2012)
<i>Taqwa</i> (Piety)	X	X			X	X
Humility	X					
Social Responsibility	X					
Self-development	X					
<i>Shura</i> (Consultation)	X			X		X
<i>Rehma</i> (Mercy)			X			
<i>Ehsan</i> (Kindness)			X			
<i>Adel</i> (Justice)			X		X	
Trustworthy						
Knowledgeable						
Consistent						
Cooperative		X				
Moderation		X	X			
Servant		X				
Eloquent		X				
Forbearing		X				
Enterprise		X				
Humility		X				
Resolve		X				
Conviction		X				
Delegation		X				
Performance			X			
Amanah (Trust)					X	
Mujahadah (Spiritual Struggle)					X	
Birr (Righteousness)					X	
Intention						X
'Ahd (Promise)					X	
Gratitude						X
Accountability						X

Islamic leadership theories. Multiple scholars have written on the concept of Islamic leadership. However, there is no agreement on a singular model, or on the attributes that leaders should possess. Table 2.2 summarizes the different attributes identified in the literature review.

The aforementioned studies represent researchers examining Islamic sources to arrive at a leadership model. Beekun and Badawi (1999) utilized a blended approach to frame Islamic leadership within a western leadership paradigm. According to their research, Islamic leadership is based on *iman* (faith), Islam, *taqwa* (piety), and *ihsan* (spiritual excellence). These three foundations set the moral framework for leadership and lead to basic behaviors: *amanah* (trust), *‘adl* (justice), *mujahadah* (spiritual struggle), *ahd* (promise), and *birr* (righteousness) (Beekun & Badawi, 1999).

There is an increasing amount of interest in Islamic leadership, but these leadership models do not take into consideration the particular nature of schools and the educational setting (Ahmad & Fontaine, 2011). Shah’s (2006; 2010) work on Islamic educational leadership highlights a few major trends when exploring educational leadership: (a) educational leadership theories and practices are embedded in Western philosophy and values, and (b) Islamic texts have a particular philosophy of education. Her conceptual papers discuss and investigate the educational leadership model and she uses her research to develop a three-dimensional leadership paradigm. Educational leaders have three overlapping roles: educator, prophet/leaders, and parent. Each one of these roles seeks to fulfill Islamic objectives. Shah’s (2006; 2010) work outlined some philosophical ideas that need to be considered when developing an Islamic educational

leadership theory, but did not identify specific characteristics or behaviors of an educational leader.

Islam's relation to servant leadership and transformational leadership. Both servant leadership and transformational leadership have been identified with the leadership style of the Prophet Muhammad (Beekun & Badawi, 1999). Servant leadership was first articulated by Robert Greenleaf (1977), and popularized through print and media (Sendjaj & Sarros, 2002). Since then, multiple studies have defined the characteristics of servant leadership (Northouse, 2013).

Servant leadership has been associated with the Islamic tradition for multiple reasons. One of the epithets of the Prophet Muhammad is named Abd-Allah, literally the servant of God. In a famous *hadith*, the Prophet Muhammad was given a choice by God between being a prophet-servant or a prophet-king, the Prophet Muhammad chose to be a prophet-servant (Ibn Arabi, trans. 2008). Additionally, the *hadith* tradition contains stories where the Prophet Muhammad encouraged followers to serve others (Salie, 2008).

Though servant leadership has been identified as a leadership style of the Prophet Muhammad, there are a limited number of studies that examine how the leadership theory has been applied in Islamic schools. Aabed's (2006) qualitative dissertation examined Islamic leadership theory and practice in 12 Islamic schools operating in Michigan. Principals identified with many of the behaviors and traits identified in the servant, transformational, and situational leadership styles, but cited religious values and beliefs as motivating factors. Multiple principals in the study identified themselves as servants of students and faculty, and referenced the Prophet Muhammad's example. Aabed's (2006) study also shed light on the traits that the principals employed in their leadership.

Table 2.3

Islamic Leadership Attributes and Attributes Utilized by Principals

Attributes of Leaders Identified in Islamic Leadership Research	Attributes utilized by Principals in Michigan (Abed, 2006)
<i>Taqwa</i> (Piety)	
Humility	X
Social Responsibility	
Self-development	
<i>Shura</i> (Consultation)	X
<i>Rehman</i> (Mercy)	X
<i>Ehsan</i> (Kindness)	X
<i>Adel</i> (Justice)	X
Trustworthy	
Knowledgeable	X
Consistent	
Cooperative	X
Moderation	X
Servant	
Eloquent	X
Forbearing	
Enterprise	X
Humility	X
Resolve	
Conviction	
Delegation	
Performance	
Amanah (Trust)	X
Mujahadah (Spiritual Struggle)	
Birr (Righteousness)	
Intention	
'Ahd (Promise)	
Gratitude	
Accountability	

All of the principals identified as using *shura* as leadership strategy, and utilized decision-making and relationships in their behavior traits. In total, Aabed (2006) identified 24 traits utilized by the principals. Table 2.3 identifies how the principal behaviors correlate to the traits identified in literature on Islamic leadership.

Salie's (2008) mixed methods study examined how servant leadership was applied to Islamic schools in Michigan and Toledo, Ohio. The mixed-methods study examined the correlation between job satisfaction and perceptions of servant leadership within Islamic organizations. Results from the study demonstrated a positive correlation between administrators' application of servant leadership traits and workforce satisfaction.

Outside of the U.S., Salameh (2011) conducted a quantitative study in Jordan, a 95% Muslim country, to determine what perceived servant leadership practices were being practiced in Jordan. Using Laub's (1999) model, Salameh (2011) measured the following behaviors: valuing people, developing people, building community, displaying authenticity, providing leadership, and sharing leadership. Results indicated that three servant leadership practices were highly used: building community, displaying authenticity, and sharing leadership. The other three categories were practiced in moderate levels: values others, develops people, and provides leadership. Salameh's (2011) study demonstrated that servant leadership is practiced in Jordanian schools, but did not lend insight into how servant leadership relates to Islamic leadership.

The aforementioned studies demonstrate that Muslims identify with servant leadership. Striepe, Clarke, and O'Donoghue's (2014) qualitative study of a Catholic, Greek Orthodox and Islamic school add specific dimension to leadership discourse within

faith-based schools because they examined how educational leadership theory and practice was informed by practitioners' faiths. Their study confirmed some of the findings of Aabed's (2006), mainly that leadership was a value-based enterprise. They conducted interviews in order to understand faith-based school leaders' perspectives on educational leadership. Findings revealed that all participants understood leadership to be a value-driven activity, drawing their values from their respective faiths. Interview participants from Al-Huda College, an Islamic school, shed light on practitioner motivations. They saw the Prophet Muhammad as a role model for leaders, and identified that their faith called them to serve others (Striepe et al., 2014).

Transformational leadership is one of the most widely written about leadership theories, and has been the subject of multiple empirical studies (Northouse, 2013). The theory was first developed by James Burns (1978) and was later expounded upon by Bernard Bass (1985). There exists significant overlap between servant leadership and transformational leadership. Transformational leadership is distinguished by the leader's motivation, the desire to lead the organization for a variety of reasons, whereas a servant leader is primarily concerned with serving (Smith, et al., 2004). Multiple scholars have attributed transformational leadership to the Prophet Muhammad (Beekun, 2012; Dehaghani, 2014; El'Amin, 2008; Mir, 2010;). In the educational setting, transformational leadership has been described as: (a) building a school vision, (b) establishing school goals, (c) providing intellectual stimulation, (d) symbolizing professional practices and values, (e) demonstrating high performance expectations, (f) developing a structure to foster participation in school decisions, and (g) offering individual support (Alsaeedi & Male, 2013).

Unlike servant leadership, there have not been any studies on transformational leadership within Islamic schools in the United States. One study in Kuwait, a majority Muslim country, indicated that Kuwaiti school principals were receptive to the practices of transformational leadership and felt there was a need to apply the leadership style to their current setting (Alsaeedi & Male, 2013). Principals in the study indicated that globalization has changed the educational environment in Kuwait, and, as educational leaders, they must respond to these shifts in a proactive manner (Alsaeedi & Male, 2013). Educational reforms require leaders to motivate and inspire staff as demands on them increase. Six of the eight interviewed principals articulated a positive view of transformational leadership practices, and shared experiences where they acted as transformational leaders (Alsaeedi & Male, 2013).

Outside of the K-12 educational setting, there have been studies conducted on transformational leadership within Islamic university settings. Ahmad and Fontaine (2011) conducted an empirical study at the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) to determine the type of leadership style employed by supervisors and managers, and how principles of Islamic leadership were perceived. A unique feature of IIUM is the explicit mention of Islamization in the university's mission statement.

The goals of IIUM, the propagation of Islamic knowledge, ethics, and values, make them a unique institution to study Islamic leadership. Approximately 25% of the university's administrative staff were surveyed. Results from the study indicated that faith (*iman*), and mutual consultation (*consultation*) were the top concern of staff members when it came to Islamic leadership principles. Beekun (2012) and Mir (2010) both noted that intention and piety, *taqwa*, are central to Islamic leadership, but followers

in this study did not rate them highly. Followers were more concerned with how they were treated, rather than the leaders' intention or piety.

Ahmad and Fontaine's (2011) study also examined the preferred style of leadership at IIUM. Staff members rated different aspects of three leadership models: transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and servant leadership. Servant leadership was the most favored style of leadership and transformational leadership was ranked highly, as well. Of the eight principles identified, three had a mean score of 4.0 or higher: (a) serves as a role model for me, (b) enhances his image of competence, and (c) mobilizes collective sense of mission, were all ranked highly. Serving as a role model and mobilizing a collection sense of mission align to the traits identified by research on Islamic leadership. The study added a component that revealed the factors influencing leadership/followership principles. Islamic revealed sources, the Quran and *Sunnah*, had the greatest influence on leadership/followership principles (Ahmad & Fontaine, 2011).

Studies at IIUM demonstrate how researchers have utilized Western leadership theories and evaluation systems in order to analyze leadership in Islamic institutions. These studies demonstrate that servant and transformational leadership are utilized and favored by Muslim practitioners. However, studies also indicate that Muslim practitioners are influenced by religious values drawn from the Quran and the *Sunnah*.

Chapter Summary

Islamic schools have become a part of the American-Muslim's culture in the United States (Abed, 2006; Omran, 1997). As the population increases, these schools will increase in size and number. Current leadership models are influenced by western philosophy and thought (Dimmock & Walker, 2000; Shah, 2010). The Islamic tradition

offers its own worldview that is couched in the Quran and the *Sunnah*. For Muslim leaders, these two sources are the fountainhead of knowledge. In the 1970s, Muslim scholars began the process of evaluating the western intellectual heritage, and responding to challenges posed by western intellectual, political, and social hegemony (Daud, 1998).

For Islamic educational thinkers, it meant articulating an approach to knowledge that was in line with Islamic philosophical thought, a combination of the sacred and the secular, and with every type of knowledge being linked back to God. This worldview creates an educational challenge for Islamic schools that must be overcome by Islamic school principals. Essentially, they are called to foster the development of civic-minded Muslim people who are able to be both American and Muslim.

The review of literature on Islamic leadership demonstrated multiple approaches to defining Islamic leadership, but that there is no consistent model for it that has yet been developed. Finally, at very least, this grounded theory study contributes to the literature on Islamic leadership in general, and helps fill the void of Islamic educational leadership.

Chapter 3: Research Design Methodology

General Perspective

This study examined the leadership traits of the Prophet Muhammad through primary source *hadith* literature, and developed a theory to guide the practices of principals of Islamic schools in the United States. The Prophet Muhammad's *Sunnah* is a main reference point for Muslims and is continually used to identify ideal behaviors. Impeding further understanding on the subject, there exists a gap in the literature on Islamic educational leadership, partly due to discourse on Islamic leadership being in a primary stage. This chapter summarizes the research design and methodology for this qualitative study.

Rationale for research approach. Research within the educational field revolves around inductive and deductive reasoning (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2006). Broadly speaking, inductive reasoning is often associated with qualitative research methods and design. Qualitative researchers believe that multiple perspectives and levels of meaning exist within the subject being studied (Lodico et al., 2006). Qualitative researchers collect and examine evidence to understand the phenomenon being studied, after which they may develop a theory or use existing theories to explain the results gathered from data analysis (Lodico et al., 2006).

Qualitative research has been defined in multiple ways; though there is no singular definition, there are characteristics specific to qualitative research (Creswell, 2013). The placement of the researcher within the interpretive paradigm is a central

aspect to qualitative research design. The researcher collects data from a single source, or multiple sources, based on the context of their research. Using both inductive and deductive methods, they develop “patterns, categories, and themes” from the data (Creswell, 2013, p. 45). Throughout the process, the researcher remains flexible and adapts the design according to the research needs. The emergent design anticipates that processes may change during the course of the study in order to provide a holistic account of the phenomenon being studied, and convey the complexities particular to the study (Creswell, 2013).

Multiple research approaches have been used by qualitative researchers. Creswell (2013) identified five major methods within qualitative research designs: (a) narrative research study, (b) ethnography, (c) phenomenology, (d) grounded theory study, and (e) case study. Each methodology has specific characteristics that make it ideal for certain studies. Based on the nature of this study, grounded theory was identified and utilized as the research design method.

Grounded theory. Grounded theory was first developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) as a way of conducting qualitative research on what the theorists recognized as a theory grounded within their data, hence termed “grounded theory.” All research is grounded in data, what makes grounded theory studies unique is the use of the “methodological package” (Glaser, 2010, p. 1). Glaser and Strauss (1967) outlined the rationale for the method and explained the main features of grounded theory. Grounded theory gained wide notability, which has been made apparent by the number of studies that employ the method.

Glaser (2010) contended that many grounded theory studies are not true to the method. Since its introduction as a research method, there have been multiple iterations to the methodology. For classical grounded theorists, those holding true to the Glaser's specifications, many of these modifications are not representative of true grounded theory (Simmons, 2010; Stern, 1994). Researchers often adopt or adapt grounded theory methods, and their approach deviates from "pure or orthodox" grounded theory (Glaser, 2010, p. 2). Such research is termed grounded theory because it utilizes grounded theory vocabulary. However, for Glaser (2009), utilizing grounded theory in this manner does not align with grounded theory procedures. He, therefore, concluded that such studies are only considered grounded theory because of the jargonizing (Glaser, 2009).

According to Stern (1994), Glaser and Strauss (1967) had very different concepts about how grounded theory should be used and applied. Differences became apparent with Strauss and Corbin's (1990) publication on grounded theory methods, and Glaser's (1992) response asserting that Strauss and Corbin (1990) had departed from grounded theory methods. Strauss and Corbin's (1990) codification of procedures may have been motivated by the need to answer criticism of grounded theory methods. However, for Glaser, the departure from the tenets of the established method led to his claim that Strauss and Corbin's method was not grounded theory at all (Stern, 1994). Instead, he termed it conceptual description (Stern, 1994).

Though debate continues between the two schools of thought, increasing literature identified both Glaser and Strauss's (1967) methodology to be grounded theory. Briks and Mills (2015) noted that Glaser and Strauss are considered first generation grounded theorists. Their methods have been adapted by second generation grounded theorists

(Briks & Mills, 2015). Within grounded theory literature, some texts have been key to the development of the method. Table 3.1 summarizes some of the major works on grounded theory methodology.

Table 3.1

Seminal grounded theory texts

Year	Author	Title
1967	Glaser and Strauss	The discovery of grounded theory
1978	Glaser	Theoretical sensitivity
1987	Strauss	Qualitative analysis for social scientists
1990	Strauss and Corbin	Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques
1992	Glaser	Basics of grounded theory analysis
1994	Strauss and Corbin	Grounded theory methodology: An overview
1998	Strauss and Corbin	Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory
2000	Charmaz	Grounded theory: Objectivist and constructivist methods
2005	Clarke	Situational analysis: Grounded theory after the postmodern turn
2006	Charmaz	Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis

Note. Adapted from *Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide*, by M. Briks & J. Mills, 2015, p. 3.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher used classical grounded theory, also known as the Glaserian grounded theory method. According to Simmons (n.d.), classical grounded theory has seven phases, as described in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2

Phases of Grounded Theory

Stage	Description
Preparation	The researcher begins by minimizing and preconceived notions or bias, and researcher's the general topic of study
Data collection	The researcher begins by collecting initial data and analyzing it. Initial analysis informs theoretical sampling, a process that directs the collection of new data.
Constant comparative analysis	In this stage the researcher engages in substantive and theoretical coding of data.
Memoing	Memos are free form writing that will help the researcher make connections between data, concepts, and relationships.
Sorting	In this process the researcher conceptually sorts memos and other data looking for connections.
Theoretical outline	As the theory evolves the researcher begins developing an outline of how to articulate the emerging theory.
Writing	This is the final stage of grounded theory, where the theory is drafted.

Note. Adapted from "What is Grounded Theory"? by O. Simmons, n.d.

These phases do not occur sequentially; but, rather, they occur in a recursive manner. Correlation between the phases and research design are discussed in the remaining sections.

Research Context

Grounded theory study begins with a researcher determining the general research problem and investigating material around the area. During this process, the researcher takes note of their bias and preconceived notions. The aim of which is to minimize

impressing preconceived ideas on to the data in order to let the theory emerge from the data.

The Prophet Muhammad's leadership traits and their applicability to Islamic school principals in the United States was identified as the general topic under investigation. Additionally, Islamic leadership theories, the context of Islamic schools, and the goals of Islamic education were all examined to give me a contextual understanding of the topic. Lastly, I examined the historical development of *hadith* literature and familiarized myself with the process of *hadith* interpretation. Reading literature on *hadith* helped me identify recognized *hadith* sources for the study.

Research bias. Researcher bias occurs when the researcher's background and preconceptions influence their observations and conclusions (Lodico et al., 2006). Preconceptions can originate from multiple areas of a person's life, including but not limited to religious, political or cultural experiences. Simmons (2010), in training grounded theorists, emphasized the need for a researcher to suspend preconceptions during research. Suspension of one's preconceptions is critical to grounded theory because introducing bias could prevent the organic emergence of the theory from the data. "Memoing" can aid in the removal, or suspension, of these preconceptions.

In this study, my familiarity with the topic allowed for a deeper and richer understanding of the subject being studied. Having majored in religious studies with a concentration in Islam as an undergraduate, and having studied the Islamic sciences (theology, law, and *hadith*) with Muslims scholars, it gave me a familiarity with the topic. This combined with my affiliation to the faith created a natural investment in the outcome.

Research Data Sources

Though many authors consider grounded theory as a qualitative method, Glaser (2008) maintained that it is a general method, applicable to quantitative and qualitative studies (Glaser, 2008). This flexibility allows for a wide range of data to be used for any given study. The research data for this study was drawn from a qualitative research paradigm that provides for a broad spectrum of choices (Creswell, 2013). Glaser and Strauss (1967) differentiated between two qualitative data sources: field and documentary. They noted, “for many, if not most, researchers, qualitative data is virtually synonymous with field work and interviews, combined with ‘background’ documents that may be necessary for putting the research in context” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p 162). However, they argued that documentary materials are “as potentially valuable for generating theory as our observation and interviews” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 163).

Within the Islamic framework, the use of documentary materials takes on a much more significant role. The *hadith* literature is considered primary source material for Muslims because it contains the verbatim words of the Prophet, his actions, and approvals. Throughout Islamic history, Muslims have relied on the *hadith* literature to determine the correct course of action, in some ways trying to extrapolate what the Prophet Muhammad would say, do, or approve of in any given situation. His *Sunnah* is an established framework that Muslim scholars refer to in matters of law, ethics, and spirituality.

The Islamic tradition contains multiple commentaries on the *hadith* literature, in which Muslim scholars analyze every aspect of the *Sunnah*. Each commentary has a

specific purpose, including exploration into the lexical, legal, and ethical issues related to the *Sunnah*. The commentaries are a form of hermeneutics, a means of understanding and interpreting text. Grounded theory is best suited for this study, because of its hermeneutical nature and heuristic potential (Rennie 2000; Rennie & Fergus, 2006).

Imam al-Nawawi and *Riyad al-salihin*. *Hadith* were initially transmitted as an oral tradition, and later became a literary tradition (Brown, 2006). As a literary tradition, many scholars of *hadith* compiled and created collections for a variety of reasons. Discussions pertaining to the major compilers of *hadith*, the different types of compilations, and the reasons for compilations for the *hadith* are beyond the scope of this study. Codification and classification of *hadith* did not occur in linear manner, it happened in multiple locations at different times. However, over time, certain scholars of *hadith* and selected books of *hadith* gained a wide audience and acceptability (Azmi, 2002).

Imam al-Nawawi was a 13th century scholar of Islamic jurisprudence, *hadith*, doctrine, Arabic language, and other subjects (Halim, 2014). His most famous compilations of *hadith* are *Kitab al-adkhar* (*The Book of Remembrance*), *Arbeen al-nawawi* (*The Forty of Al-nawawi*), and *Riyad al-salihin* (*The Gardens of the Righteous*). The *Riyad al-Salihin* is a widely circulated textbook of *hadith* that was compiled to convey the *Sunnah* related to guiding people's conduct. In total, it contains 1,896 *hadith* and has been taught and read for centuries (Uthaymeen, 1998). The caliber of this compilation, and the content of the text, made it an ideal sample for studying the leadership behaviors of the Prophet Muhammad.

Instruments Used in Data Collection

This qualitative grounded theory study utilized documentary material as data. A standard textbook of *hadith* containing a large sample size, *Riyad al-Salihin*, was selected for data analysis. However, when examining and sorting through the data set, I was guided by the research questions. The following research questions guided the process:

1. What are characteristics of the life of the Prophet Muhammad, based on the *Sunnah*, that describe leadership behavior?
2. What leadership model can be derived from these characteristics that can aid educational leaders within Islamic schools?

Data collection and data analysis are reiterative in grounded theory. I initially used open coding to examine the *hadith*, after this, in vivo and process coding were used to generate a comprehensive set of codes. Using the constant comparative method, I examined connection between codes and memos as he began to theoretically code the data, the second cycle of coding. Figure 3.1 illustrates the relationship between the coding, constant comparison, memoing, and theory development. Theoretical coding and focused coding led to the identification of two core conceptual categories, and their related themes and properties.

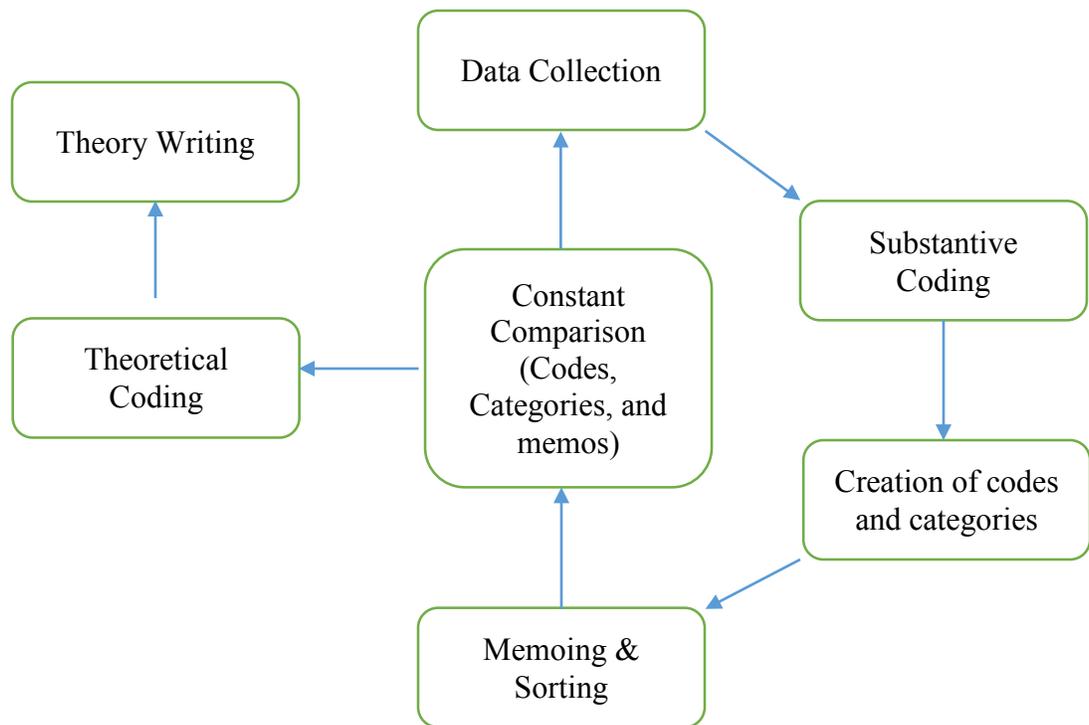


Figure 3.1. Classical grounded theory constant comparative method.

Data Analysis

Grounded theory as hermeneutics. Hermeneutics is focused around the interpretation of text, and has a long-standing history of being used with religious texts (Rennie, 2000). Within European intellectual circles, hermeneutics plays a prominent role in the social sciences and education. However, discussion on hermeneutics, as a form of qualitative inquiry, is not as prominent in North America as elsewhere. Kinsella (2006) maintained that hermeneutical thought is the philosophical basis of qualitative research. The connection between hermeneutics and grounded theory is made explicit by Rennie (2000), stating that “grounded theory is indeed hermeneutical” (p. 482). The hermeneutical approach has five main characteristics: seeking understanding rather than explanation, acknowledging the situated location of interpretation, recognizing the role of

language and history, viewing inquiry as conversation, and being comfortable with ambiguity (Kinsella, 2006). All these elements are present in the classical grounded theory approach to data analysis.

Substantive coding. The core of grounded theory lies in the systematic exploring of data that begins with developing descriptions, creating conceptual categories, and ending with the development of a robust theory (Walker & Myrick, 2006). Classical grounded theory divides the coding into two phases, substantive and theoretical. Substantive coding is further divided into open coding and selective coding.

I began the substantive coding process by open coding the *hadith*. This was done in four ways: (a) coding within the margins of the textbook, (b) coding an electronic copy of the *hadith*, (c) categorizing and coding on a Microsoft Word document, (d) coding in a memoing journal. The four methods used for open coding did not occur sequentially, each method was used based on the need to visualize categories. For example, while open coding within the margins of the textbook I noticed certain codes appearing. However, the *hadith* containing these codes were scattered throughout the texts. In order to better understand the text, I reorganized these *hadith* in Microsoft Word. The rearrangement allowed me to see connections between *hadith* that had previously went unnoticed.

After open coding the *hadith*, I used in vivo and process coding to further analyze the data. In vivo coding is used to extract indigenous terms (Saldana, 2009). Using this coding method allowed me to explore connection between certain codes and their appearance in the *hadith*. This was useful because the *hadith* literature is written in Arabic, and often different Arabic words were used to indicate similar concepts. In vivo

coding helped to sort these earlier codes together into larger codes. During a memoing session, I realized that it would be relevant to see how the Prophet Muhammad's words aligned with his actions. Process coding is utilized to identify action (Saldana, 2009), and was used to identify the specific actions of the Prophet Muhammad.

Open coding, in vivo coding, and process coding were the only coding methods used in the first cycle of coding to analyze the *hadith*. Coding continued until categories and properties emerged, at which point, I moved on to selectively coding around patterns and core categories (Simmons, 2010; Walker & Myrick, 2006). Selective coding was used to "elevate the data to an abstract level" (Simmons, 2010, p. 27).

Once substantive coding had reached saturation, I began the second cycle of coding by applying the theoretical coding process. Theoretical coding happened at the conceptual level and required integration of substantive codes, drawing connections between patterns, and developing them into a theoretical framework. I started the theoretical coding process by establishing a sorting method. Codes were sorted and constantly compared with other codes. At times, codes were also compared to data to see the alignment between the two. Memoing during the theoretical coding process allowed me to capture essential learning points that led to the emergence of the conceptual categories, theme, and properties.

Memo writing. While researching the phenomenon, I engaged writing informal memos. Memos were written before, during, and after coding sessions. These memos contained fragments of thoughts regarding the research questions and their relationship to the data being analyzed. I documented internal thoughts about the *hadith*, their relationship to leadership behaviors, connections to ideas that were generated in the

review of literature, possible relationship between codes, potential internal biases, as well as other topics that seems to be connected to the study. Memos, beginning as a free stream of consciousness, progress into concrete ideas about concepts and their relationships, eventually developing into ideas that help form the core conceptual categories. They assisted in the generation of an Islamic educational theory.

Sorting and theoretical outlining. Memoing, sorting, and developing a theoretical outline occurred in a recursive manner. Using the constant comparative method allowed the researcher to “conceptualize and form emergent theories” (Glaser, 2002, p. 1). The entire process was hermeneutical in nature, in many ways similar to the hermeneutic circle. Through it, the researcher came to understand the text, as well as each part’s interdependence and interrelationship (Kinsella, 2006; Rennie, 2000). The sorting process assisted me in identifying themes and concepts, and determining the relationship between all the information. Sorting facilitated the emergence of a theoretical outline, which was the final step before the writing of the theory (Simmons, 2010). In the process of gaining understanding, the researcher entered into the hermeneutic circle, where there is a continuing increase in understanding of the phenomenon. The process reached a place of stability and the findings were articulated as an emergent theory.

Credibility, dependability, and transferability. Qualitative research has gained acceptance as a meaningful way of conducting studies, but it is important to note that it cannot be judged by the same criteria as quantitative research (Lodico et al., 2006). Discussions on the quality of a qualitative researcher revolve around credibility, dependability, and transferability (Brinks, 1993).

One criterion for credibility is a researcher’s prolonged and meaningful participation with the topic. For this study, I spent a considerable amount of time analyzing the 1,896 *hadith*, compared findings with other literature on Islamic thought, and discussed those findings with three Muslim scholars. The scholars used to verify the findings of the study were all born and raised in North America, adhered to beliefs and practices of *Sunni* Islam, attended and graduated with post-secondary degrees, pursued traditional Islamic studies both in North America and abroad, and have served as preachers and teachers within the Muslims community. Table 3.3 provides demographic information about the scholars consulted for the study.

Table 3.3

Demographic Information of Muslim Scholars Consulted

Age	College/University Education	Years Studying Islam	Roles Played in the Muslim Community
30	Bachelor of Science: Accounting	8	Preacher Teacher
35	Doctorate of Philosophy: Islamic Studies	19	Scholar-in-Residence Teacher Imam
40	Bachelor of Arts Honors: Religious Studies & Middle Eastern Studies	20	Preacher Teacher Informal Counselor

Books, ideas, and concepts become authoritative through their dissemination and evaluation by scholars over the course of history. The goal of discussing the findings

with a panel of Muslims scholars was to verify that the findings are in line with the general understanding of the Prophet Muhammad and his mission.

The dependability of this study is built on careful adherence to the tenants of grounded theory methodology. Scholars of Islam encourage Muslims to study and utilize *hadith*, while cautioning them to not make legal or theological judgments. Since the study was focused on understanding and interpreting the behaviors of the Prophet Muhammad, it is dependable within the Islamic framework.

The theory developed in this study is transferable to other areas of study. Its transferability and applicability is discussed in chapter five. Grounded theory encourages a level of conceptualization that transcends the immediate circumstances. The emerging theory found in this study can be applied and/or adapted outside the purview of this study.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the qualitative method of inquiry was explained and the research topic was connected with grounded theory methodology. Justification for utilizing *hadith* literature was presented and connected with the grounded theory methodology as a hermeneutical device. Lastly, classical grounded theory methods were outlined and described. In the next chapter, I present the results of grounded theory study.

Chapter 4: Results

Research Questions

The purpose of this grounded theory study was to identify the leadership behaviors of the Prophet Muhammad, based on the records preserved in the *hadith* and the *Sunnah*, and to develop an educational leadership theory that can aid the work of Islamic school principals in the United States. A key principle of classical grounded theory methodology is limiting preconceived notions and ideas about the topic being studied. The goal of this research study was to allow the data to speak and inform the generation of a theory.

Researchers are encouraged to investigate the topic being studied, but are advised to refrain from allowing other theories to influence their analysis of data (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Research questions are formed, but are subject to reevaluation based on the data coding process (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). By keeping an open mind, I was amenable to modifying research questions and data sources (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The final research questions were as follows:

1. What are characteristics of the life of the Prophet Muhammad, based on the *Sunnah*, that describe leadership behavior?
2. What educational leadership model can be derived from these characteristics that can aid principals within Islamic schools in the United States?

For this grounded theory study, the following topics were identified as areas of interest: the history and development of leadership theory, Islamic leadership theory, and the development and operation of Islamic schools in the United States. Pertinent topics were discussed in the review of literature.

This chapter documents the results of this grounded theory study. Theoretical coding was used to develop the core categories that defined an educational leadership model based on the life of the Prophet Muhammad, and therefore represent an emerging theory of Islamic educational leadership. According to Glaser and Strauss (1967) the emerging theory is based on conceptual categories that have been identified through the coding process. The content that informed the creation of a conceptual categories become major themes of the theory. Lastly, properties are identified as a way to “increase the categories’ generality and explanatory power” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 24).

Data Analysis and Findings

The Prophet Muhammad an educational leader. In the process of constant comparative data analysis, it became apparent that the Prophet Muhammad was both a leader and a teacher. Given the nature of the Prophet Muhammad’s mission, to be an *exemplar par excellence*, and the explicit leadership role he had, all his actions were seen as a manifestation of leadership style based on the *Sunnah* (Beekun & Badawi, 1999). Furthermore, one of the main functions, identified in the data analysis, of the Prophet Muhammad, which is also stated in the Quran, was to teach people, “A messenger from among them who shall recite unto them Thy revelation, and shall instruct them in scripture, and in wisdom and shall make them grow” (Quran 2:129 trans. Pickthall,

1996). Additionally, the instructional function of the Prophet Muhammad becomes apparent in the famous *hadith* of Gabriel (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 60).

“One day while we were sitting with the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, there appeared before us a man whose clothes were exceedingly white and whose hair was exceedingly black. No trace of travel could be seen on him and none of us knew him. He walked up and sat down by the Prophet. Resting his knees against his and placing the palms of his hands on his thighs, he said, ‘O Muhammad! Tell me about Islam.’ The Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, said, ‘Islam is to testify that there is no god but God and that Muhammad is the Messenger of God, to perform the prayers, to pay alms to the poor, to fast in Ramadan, and to make the pilgrimage to the House if you are able to do so.’ He said, ‘You have spoken the truth,’ and we were amazed at him asking the Prophet Muhammad and then saying that the Prophet Muhammad had spoken the truth. He said, ‘Then tell me about belief.’ The Prophet Muhammad said, ‘It is to believe in God, His angels, His Books, His messengers, and the last day, and to believe in the decree, both its good and its evil.’ He said, ‘You have spoken the truth.’ He said, ‘Then tell me about *ihsan*.’ The Prophet Muhammad said, ‘It is to worship God as though you could see Him for while you do not see Him, He sees you.’ He said, ‘Then tell me about the Hour.’ The Prophet Muhammad said, ‘The one asked about it knows no more about it than the asker.’ He said, ‘Then tell me about its signs.’ The Prophet Muhammad said, ‘That a slave girl will give birth to her mistress and that you will see barefooted, destitute herdsmen competing in constructing lofty buildings.’

Then he left but I stayed on a while and the Prophet Muhammad said, ‘Umar, do you know who the questioner was?’ I said, ‘God and His Messenger know best.’

The Prophet Muhammad said, ‘It was Gabriel who came to teach you your religion.’ (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 60)

The *hadith* records an interaction between the archangel Gabriel and the Prophet Muhammad that took place in the presence of the Prophet Muhammad’s companions. Though the *hadith* ends with the Prophet Muhammad saying, “It was Gabriel who came to teach you your religion” (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 60), it is evident in the interaction that the Prophet Muhammad is the one giving the answers to the question, making the Prophet the teacher. Subsequently, his words and actions are considered to be an explication of the educational objectives of a leader.

Modeling and Directing Behaviors

Based on the first research question, I examined the *Sunnah* to determine the leadership behaviors of the Prophet Muhammad. Modeling and directing behaviors became the core conceptual category. Table 4.1 contains the conceptual category, related themes, and properties that will be discussed in this section.

Table 4.1

Conceptual Category: Modeling and Directing Behaviors

Conceptual category	Themes (Leadership Behaviors)	Properties
Modeling and directing behaviors	Personalized leadership	Leadership roles Role modeling
	Relationship with God and humanity	Devotion to God Concern for followers
	Treatment of People	Promoting gentleness Promoting justice Promoting welfare of the weak
	Adaptive leadership	Follower potential

Early works on leadership theory were based on trait-based theory. Researchers sought to identify the specific traits that good leaders possessed (Ali, 2012; Northouse, 2013; Zaccaro, 2007). The strengths of a trait based approach were focused on its intuitive appeal, emphasis on the role of the leader, and establishment of a criteria for “what we need to look for if we want to be leaders” (Northouse, 2013, p. 30). This approach fits within the Islamic framework, where the Quran identifies the Prophet Muhammad as a “good example (Quran, 3:79 trans. Arberry, 1996) that should be emulated, “if you love God, follow me [Prophet Muhammad] (Quran, 3:31 trans. Arberry, 1996).

Results from the *hadith* analysis demonstrated that the Prophet Muhammad explicitly instructed followers to emulate his behaviors, “hold fast to my *Sunnah*” (Riyad al-salihin, Hadith 157), “When I forbid you to do something, avoid it, and when I command you to do something, do as much as you are able to” (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith

156). Precedence was given to avoiding the matters that had been forbidden by the Prophet Muhammad, while, simultaneously, following the commands to one's ability.

Mapping the *hadith* literature indicated that companions of the Prophet Muhammad attempted to emulate all of his behaviors. One the closest of the Prophet Muhammad's companions, Umar, the second of the rightly guided caliphs, was reported to been seen kissing the black stone embedded in the Kaba, and saying:

I know that you are merely a stone that can bestow neither harm nor benefit. If I had not seen the messenger of God, may peace and blessings be upon him, kiss you, I would not have kissed you. (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 167)

When the followers of the Prophet Muhammad misunderstood or deviated from *Sunnah* the Prophet Muhammad would correct their understanding (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 142; *Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 251). Analysis of the *hadith* illustrated that the Prophet Muhammad's followers often inquired about his routines in order to emulate him. Some of the followers, after hearing about the Prophet Muhammad's personal practice, decided to take a different approach.

Anas said, "When they were told, it was as if they thought it was little and said, 'Where are we in relation to the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, who has been forgiven his past and future wrong actions?'" He said, "One of them said, 'I will pray all of every night.' Another said, 'I will fast all the time and not break the fast.' The other said, 'I will withdraw from women and never marry.' The Messenger of God came to them and said, 'Are you the ones who said such-and-such? By God, I am the one among you with the most fear and awareness of God, but I fast and break the fast, I pray and I sleep, and I marry

women. Whoever disdains my *sunnah* is not with me.”” (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 143)

Upon hearing that these followers were going to deviate from his normative practices, the Prophet Muhammad emphasized that following the *Sunnah* took precedence over a person’s individual choice. Other reports from my data analysis of the *hadith* substantiate that the Prophet Muhammad taught his followers to look to his example and follow it.

The conceptual category, modeling and directing behaviors, sets forth the leadership framework based on the *Sunnah*. Themes related to the category are: (a) personalized leadership, (b) relationship with God and humanity, (c) treatment of people, and (d) adaptive leadership.

Personalized leadership. Leadership was a part of the Prophet Muhammad’s life, especially after becoming a prophet. After the Islamic faith began, the Prophet Muhammad’s became a religious leader, head of state, judge, military commander, and so on. Analysis of the *hadith* showed that the Prophet Muhammad believed that everyone had a contextual leadership role, and that leadership was personalized based on a person’s social, political and economic standing. The properties under this theme were: defining leadership and role modeling.

Leadership roles. Two types of leadership, official leadership and personal leadership, can be identified in the *Sunnah*. As a head of state and a religious leader, the Prophet Muhammad placed people within political and religious leadership roles, these represented official leadership roles (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 52; *Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 680). In general, the Prophet Muhammad cautioned against avidly desiring positions of

leadership. Based on analysis, a leadership position was serious responsibility. Leadership was a trust that God would hold people accountable for, “You will covet leadership, but it will be a source of regret on the day of rising” (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 677). As a result, the Prophet advised people against eagerly seeking leadership positions, “Do not ask for leadership. If you are given it without asking for it, you will be helped in it. If you are given it through asking for it, it will be up to you” (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 674).

In determining who would hold official positions of leadership, the Prophet Muhammad would judge based on a person’s ability to carry out the duties accordingly (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 453). In certain cases, the Prophet Muhammad prohibited people from taking positions of leadership because he deemed them incapable, thereby setting a precedence for evaluating leader competence.

Abu Dharr said, “I said, Messenger of God, why do you not appoint me?” He clapped me on the shoulder with his hand and then said, “Abu Dharr, you are weak. It is a trust, and on the day of rising it will be disgrace and regret except for the man who takes it as it should be taken and fulfils what is demanded of him in respect of it” (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 676)

The inability to take an official leadership role did not reflect a deficiency in faith. Taking on a leadership role without the appropriate skills, however, would be harmful for the person and those who follow him. Ignorant leaders would “go astray and lead others astray” (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 1392).

Leadership was not limited to official positions, but extended into people’s personal lives as well.

All of you are shepherds and are responsible for your flock. The ruler is a shepherd to his subjects, the man is a shepherd of his family, and the woman is a shepherd in respect to her husband's house and children. All of you are shepherds and are responsible for your flock." (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 283)

Individuals in society have a leadership role based on their respective position in society. The Prophet Muhammad outlined how to fulfill the responsibilities of each of these roles, either in word or deed. The *Sunnah*, therefore, sets down the principles for these roles.

Role modeling. In examining the *Sunnah*, the Prophet Muhammad exemplified a certain set of virtues. The *hadith* mentions the importance of having good character, "the best of you are best in character" (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 625), "piety is good character" (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 590), and "those I love most and those sitting nearest to me on the day of rising will be those of you with the best character" (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 631). The traits and behaviors of the Prophet Muhammad, taken as an aggregate, demonstrate the character of the Prophet Muhammad, and outline the traits leaders should aspire to.

A leader's character is an important aspect of the leadership paradigm. Developing better leaders, entails developing their "positive leadership traits or qualities called *virtues*" (Johnson, 2013, p. 78). For Muslims the Prophet Muhammad embodied these virtues.

Relationship with God and humanity. Humanity has two sets of obligations, one to God and the other to their fellow human beings (Mir, 2010). From a leadership perspective these obligations require leaders to develop their relationship with God and

humanity. Two properties were identified from the data analysis as a part of this theme, devotion to God and concern for followers.

Devotion to God. The life of the Prophet Muhammad revolved around deepening his relationship with God, which was a foundational part of modeling behaviors for his followers. It was manifested in multiple ways throughout the *hadith* literature. His days and nights were filled with a constant attention to his relationship with God. The wife of the Prophet Muhammad observed that he prayed continuously through the night, and inquired why he prayed so earnestly. The Prophet Muhammad responded, “Should I not be a thankful servant” (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 1160). During the holy month of Ramadan, in the last 10 days, he “would stay up during the night praying, and wake up his family, strive and devote himself to worship” (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 99). Even though the *hadith* indicates that the Prophet was sinless he, nevertheless, would continuously repent to God (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 13).

As a leader, he demonstrated a deep sense of devotion to God, and his interaction with humanity was an extension of his devotion to God. It was God who said to him, “It was by the mercy of Allah that thou wast lenient with them (O Muhammad), for if thou hadst been stern and fierce of heart they would have dispersed from round about thee. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult with them upon the conduct of affairs” (Quran: 3:159 trans. Pickthall, 1996).

Concern for humanity. Looking through the lens of leadership, the Prophet Muhammad’s central concern was helping people draw close to God. To this effect he frequently considered what was in the best interests of the community. He advised moderation in all aspects of the life.

The Prophet Muhammad said, “The *deen* is easy. Anyone who makes the *deen* too hard on himself will find it becomes too much for him. So aim for what is right, follow a middle path, and accept the good news of the reward for right action.” (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 145)

He promoted moderation to prevent people from over exerting themselves and wearing out. When informed about the amount of worship an individual engaged in he remarked, “You must only do what you are able . . . God does not grow weary of rewarding you as you will grow weary” (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 142). To prevent excessive behaviors, he even prohibited followers from taking on certain actions. The wife of the Prophet Muhammad stated that he “forbade continuous fasting as a mercy to people” (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 230).

Furthermore, the Prophet Muhammad also demonstrated his desire to uplift his community through acts of service. He frequently gave in charity; in one case he sacrificed a sheep and distributed the majority in charity (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 558). Through various acts of service, the Prophet Muhammad demonstrated a heightened sense of concern for humanity.

Treatment of people. The outward behaviors of the Prophet Muhammad are illustrative of the leader-member interactions that occurred between him and his followers. They demonstrate his influence on the people around him. In the prior section, I noted the Prophet Muhammad’s concern for humanity. His concern becomes more apparent when looking at the theme treatment of people. Key properties of the theme are: (a) promoting gentleness, (b) promoting justice, and (c) promoting the welfare of the weak.

Promoting gentleness. In the beginning of Islam Muslims were subject to physical and verbal abuse, some were tortured to death. The Prophet Muhammad, though a Meccan noble, was not spared public humiliation and beatings. In the face of discrimination and abuse, the Prophet Muhammad opted taking a gentle route. On one occasion, the Prophet was bleeding profusely after having been beaten. While wiping the blood from his face, he prayed, “O God, forgive my people. They do not know” (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 36). “My people,” indicating Meccans who had not embraced Islam and were openly hostile towards Muslims.

Even when the balance of power shifted, and the Prophet Muhammad could have responded to abuse and mistreatment, he chose to exercise patience and generosity with those who mistreated him. A Bedouin Arab approached the Prophet Muhammad, while the Prophet was in the midst of his companions, and violently yanked on his collar. The surrounding companions were upset and ready to retaliate, when the Prophet Muhammad stopped them. He proceeded to laugh and give the Bedouin a gift (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 645).

The Prophet Muhammad’s interaction with people encouraged gentleness. He called followers to kindness by connecting it to God’s kindness, “God is kind and loves kindness” (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 634). His own kindness was apparent to his followers. On one occasion, a man urinated in the mosque of the Prophet, which the companions considered a sign of disrespect, but the Prophet Muhammad calmed them down saying, “You were sent to make things easy and not difficult” (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 636). Analysis of the *hadith* contains multiple other examples in which the Prophet Muhammad opted to be patient, merciful, compassionate, and gentle.

Promoting justice and rights. The Prophet Muhammad's gentleness was paralleled by his sense of justice and righteousness. The concept of justice was a reoccurring property within the theme; two forms of justice are discussed in the *hadith*, divine justice and human justice. Divine justice is relegated to God and comes about on the day of rising. In his interactions with followers, the Prophet Muhammad often reminded them of divine justice as a way to caution them to be just in their dealings.

Human justice, on the other hand, is experienced in multiple ways. The *hadith* literature indicates that humans must be just in their dealings with each other, this is especially pertinent in leadership positions. The Prophet Muhammad often indicated how injustice towards ones' fellow human beings would become a trial in front of God, "Beware of injustice. Injustice will be darkness on the day of rising" (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 563). Leaders were cautioned to fulfill their responsibility towards followers and to give people their due rights.

In addition, the *hadith* implores people, leaders and followers, to advocate for justice. The prerogative was to "restrain the unjust" (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 196). Promoting justice and actively working to prevent injustice present a critical aspect of leadership. "Whoever of you sees something wrong should change it with his hand; if he cannot, then with his tongue; if he cannot, then with his heart, and that is the weakest form of belief" (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 184). Even in the face of danger people are reminded to speak out against injustice. "The best *jihad* is a just word in the presence of a tyrannical ruler" (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 194).

During the life of the Prophet Muhammad, one of his functions was to make legal decisions as a judge. His behaviors in this role illustrate how leaders should facilitate

justice when it involves settling a dispute. In litigation, the Prophet Muhammad affirmed his human capacity as a judge, making decisions based on the facts presented, and not information what was revealed to him as a prophet.

I am a human being and you bring your disputes to me. It may be that one of you is more eloquent in stating his case than another and so I give judgement in his favor according to what I hear. If I award him judgement at the expense of the right of his brother, I am cutting out a piece of the Fire for him. (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 219)

It is important for a leader to suspend his or own thoughts and make decisions based on evidence. The context of the *hadith* alludes to the Prophet's awareness that some of his ruling favored the wrong party, however he could only make a ruling based on the evidence provided.

Promoting welfare of the weak. Meccan society, before the arrival of Islam, was rife with social, economic, and political problems. The *hadith* specifically direct people help the poor, orphans (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 262), and women (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 265; *Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 267). Prior to the receiving revelation, the Prophet Muhammad helped the poor, orphans, and women. After prophet-hood the Prophet Muhammad continued to advocate on behalf of people who did not have social or political standing to do so. As a leader he encouraged his followers to look after those in need, equating it to engaging in battle for the sake of God. "Someone who strives on behalf of widows and the poor is like someone who fights in the way of Allah" (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 265).

Individuals who had the ability to promote change were encouraged to help those in need. This was encouraged without placing a stigma on being poor. Rather the poor were seen as a blessing. When one of the Prophet Muhammad's companions thought he was better than the economically disadvantaged around him, the Prophet Muhammad informed him that people are given "victory and provision on account of the weak" (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 271). In other words, he indicated that the poor and weak have a special rank with God. "There is many an unkempt person, driven away from doors, but if he were to swear an oath by God, He would fulfill it" (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 257).

Adaptive leadership. Leadership theories can be categorized in multiple ways. In the theoretical framework I noted two types of theories, leader-centered and follower-context centered theories. The first three themes, personalized leadership, relationship with God and humanity, and treatment of people, can be categorized under the leader-centered theory model. These themes focused on understanding the leadership paradigm expounded by the Prophet Muhammad, explored his ethics and character, and delved into how his internal beliefs manifested in his interactions with people. The adaptive leadership themes focused on the follower-context model. Here we see the Prophet Muhammad adapting his leadership style based on assessing followers' potential.

Follower capacity. Followers of the Prophet Muhammad came from various parts of society, and each individual had their temperament (Watt, 1961). During his lifetime, the Prophet Muhammad took into consideration his followers' capacity, and as a result made specific decisions to create or prevent precedence, here meaning the *Sunnah*. In other words, the Prophet Muhammad taught his followers to look at his example and

follow it (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 143; *Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 1069; *Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 1316).

However, at times, the Prophet Muhammad noted that his personal habits could be difficult to follow, and noted that following them was recommended. For example, it was the practice of the Prophet Muhammad to brush his teeth multiple times a day, especially prior to engaging in worship. Though it was his *Sunnah*, and he strongly recommended cleaning one's teeth, he chose not to make it an obligation for his community. He said, "if not for the fact that I might over burden my community, I would have ordered them to use the siwak (a wooden type of toothbrush) for every prayer" (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 214).

Similarly, he encouraged people in leadership roles to consider their followers' capacity. He demonstrated this behavior by shortening his prayer so as not to cause duress to a crying baby's mother (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 231). Then coupled it by informing people who led prayer to keep it short. "When any of you lead other people in prayer, you should make it short, for among you are there are weak, sick and old people. When you pray by yourself, you can make it as long as you wish" (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 228). These and other examples illustrate that the Prophet Muhammad considered his followers' potential and adjusted accordingly.

The goal of the first research question was to identify the leadership behaviors of the Prophet Muhammad. During the data analysis it became apparent that the Prophet Muhammad played multiple leadership roles in society. Though the roles and responsibilities varied, analysis of the data revealed core conceptual categories that were the underpinning of his leadership style. Modeling and directing behaviors became the

core conceptual category because it represents the major function of the Prophet Muhammad. The four themes related to this topic were: (a) personalized leadership, (b) relationship with God and humanity, (c) treatment of people, and (d) adaptive leadership. These themes contextualized how the Prophet Muhammad led his community. Lastly, the properties furnished evidence to further clarify the leadership behaviors of the Prophet Muhammad.

Emerging Islamic Educational Leadership Model

The second research question focused on determining what educational leadership model can be derived to aid an educational leader within Islamic schools in the United States. Analysis of the data points to the relationship between a leader and their ability to motivate their followers towards a particular goal. Islamic educational leadership, based on analysis of the *Sunnah*, is the interaction between the leader and follower that promotes social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual growth. The distinction of Islamic educational leadership is rooted in the theocentric worldview, or in Islamic terms, a *tawhid* centered outlook.

Results from the first research question highlighted that the Prophet Muhammad was both a leader and a teacher. His leadership behaviors outlined Islamic educational objectives. This section provides a framework of those educational objectives and posits it as an Islamic educational leadership model. Developing a theocentric worldview emerged as the core conceptual category related to the second research question. Four themes were connected to the core conceptual category: (a) fidelity to God and his prophet, (b) developing a faith-based identity, (c) instilling a sense of social justice, and

(d) stewardship of the natural world. Table 4.2 summarizes the core conceptual category, themes, and properties.

Table 4.2

Conceptual Category: Developing a Theocentric Worldview

Conceptual category	Themes (Leadership Behaviors)	Properties
Developing a theocentric worldview	Fidelity to God and His prophet Developing a faith-based identity	Active reflection Precedence of the afterlife <i>Ummah</i> Familial ties Social responsibility Preventing harm

Fidelity to God and His prophet. During the course of the coding process it became apparent that the Prophet Muhammad’s message was centered on reorienting people to God, primarily, and himself as the messenger. This reorientation came as a result of (a) active reflection and focusing on the (b) precedence of the afterlife.

Active reflection. During the first cycle of coding, intention and repentance were identified as primary codes. Closer examination during the sorting process led to the emergence of active reflection as a property in this theme. In the data analysis, it was noticeable that the Prophet Muhammad exhibited multiple examples of directing followers to consider their intentions and align them to actions deemed pleasing to God.

Actions go by their intentions. Everyone gets what they intend. Anyone, therefore, who emigrates to God and His messenger, his emigration is indeed to God and His messenger. But anyone who emigrates to gain something of this world or to marry a woman, his emigration is to that which he emigrated. (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 1)

Actively making God the focus of one's actions is reiterated in different scenarios, and followers are reminded that God "looks at your hearts" (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 7).

The message to actively reflect on one's intentions and motivations is not limited to actions that are immediately possible, but extends to activities that one may not be able to perform. During an expedition, the Prophet Muhammad remarked to those with him, "There are certain men still in Medina who have accompanied you on every stretch you have travelled and every valley you have crossed. It was only illness that prevented them from coming" (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 4). In this *hadith* the Prophet Muhammad connected how simply intending to a good action with God's good pleasure.

In the case that a person may not be able to complete the intended action, they are still encouraged to reflect and make a good intention, "Whoever intends to do a good action and then does not do it, God, the blessed and exalted, will write a full good action for him" (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 11). Other *hadith* indicate that followers are rewarded for their actions solely based on their intention. Though the term intention is not always explicitly mentioned in the *hadith*, the underlying feature in all *hadith* is focusing one's mind, intention, towards God. *Hadith* on repentance illustrate this point. These *hadith* do not explicitly mention the word intention, but the act of repentance requires active reflection. For example, "God will turn towards anyone who turns in repentance" (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 17).

During one of the military expeditions, Prophet Muhammad ordered every able man to attend. Some of his companions of the Prophet Muhammad opted not attend an expedition even though they were able bodied. Upon the Prophet Muhammad's return, all those who stayed behind came to explain their reason for not attended. However,

some of the companions admitted that they had stayed behind without an excuse. One of them said, “I know that if I were to tell you an excuse it might satisfy you . . . If I tell you the truth, you will be angry with me, but I hope for a good outcome from God” (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 21). After admitting that he had remained behind without any excuse, the follower was placed under a ban in which no one would speak to him. The companion focused his intention on repenting to God. After 50 days of repenting, a verse of the Quran was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad declaring that the companion’s repentance was accepted. The *hadith* reads:

Ka’b said, ‘When I greeted the Messenger his face was shining with joy and he said, “Rejoice in the best day that has come to you since your mother bore you!” I said, “Is it from you, Messenger of God, or from God?” He said, “Indeed it is from God, the Mighty and Exalted!”’ (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 21)

This *hadith* sheds light on multiple points. Firstly, the Prophet Muhammad had taught his follower to focus on God. Even in admitting his wrong, the companion noted that he did so because of God. Secondly, the Prophet Muhammad was also under God’s direction, the ban was lifted after the Prophet Muhammad received revelation that the companion had been forgiven. Lastly, the Prophet drew the companion’s attention to the fact that God, not the prophet, forgave him.

The Prophet Muhammad directed followers to affirm that their intention was exclusively focused on God. Thereby setting precedence for Islamic educational leaders to instill a core value of loyalty to God, above and beyond anyone or anything else. For educational leaders it entails facilitating an atmosphere where a student’s central identity revolves around their relationship with God, all other forms of identity are subservient to

that core identity. This paradigm is coupled by values and beliefs transmitted about the afterlife.

Precedence of the afterlife. Moving forward, believers' actions would be motivated by their fidelity to God and his Prophet, as well as beliefs transmitted about the afterlife. True intelligence was defined by considering the long-term, "The intelligent man is the one who subjugates himself and works for what will come after death. The stupid man is the one who follows his own whims" (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 66). From an educational standpoint, it meant helping followers consider the ultimate consequences of their actions, giving them a sense of moral purpose.

In actively preaching to his followers, the Prophet Muhammad reminded his followers, in word and deed, of the long term vision articulated in the Quran and the *Sunnah*, where the world is seen as a transient experience that humans will pass through to their ultimate destination. "Be in the world as if you were a stranger or a traveler on the road" (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 574). Death and the afterlife become an impetus for a person to return back to God, "God the Mighty and Majestic accepts repentance of His servant as long as his death rattle has not begun" (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 18). However, reflection on death is coupled with encouragement to hope for a long life filled with good actions, "The best of people is the one who lives a long life and whose actions are good" (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 108).

Developing a faith-based identity. The review of literature revealed that identity is a complex psychological phenomenon. People have multiple identities that they negotiate on a regular basis. Literature on Muslims in the United States, in general, and in Islamic schools, in particular demonstrated that there was a struggle between the

multiple identities that students were confronted with. Being young, Muslim, and American fostered different levels of anxiety (Sirin & Fine, 2007). Identity was a prominent theme in the coding process, and during the second cycle of coding developing a faith-based identity emerged as a theme. Three properties were identified within the theme: (a) *ummah*, (b) familial ties, and (c) social responsibility, and (d) preventing harm.

Ummah. With the birth of Islam, the Prophet Muhammad initiated a new type of identity based on faith, and grounded in theocentric worldview. Moving forward, the term *ummah* represented the religious bond between Muslims. Fellow believers' religious bond transcended all other relationship, and they were encouraged to love each other solely for God's sake. In a story the Prophet Muhammad informed his followers about the importance of this religious bond being built on one's devotion to God.

A man visited a brother of his in another town and God appointed an angel to guard him on his way. When he came to him, the angel said, "Where are you going?" He said, "I am going to a brother of mine in this town." He said, "Do you have some property with him that you want to check on?" He said, "No, it is only that I love him for the sake of God Almighty." He said, "I am the messenger of God to you to tell you that God loves you as you love this man for His sake"

(*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 361).

The loving religious bond became an essential part of the faith "you will not enter the garden until you believe, and you will not believe until you love one another" (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 378).

The religious bond went beyond emotional attachments to one's fellow believers. Being part of the *ummah* entailed that believers have certain rights accorded to them by

Islam. In one *hadith* the Prophet Muhammad mentions five rights of Muslims have upon each other, “returning the greetings of peace, visiting the sick, joining the funeral procession, accepting invitations, and sending blessings on those who sneeze” (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 234). Being a part of the *ummah* necessitated a psychological shift in identity. Social, economic, and political interactions with other Muslims were now governed by their faith-based identity.

Familial bonds. Though the religious bond established through the concept of the *ummah* transcended other identities, it was coupled by commands to maintain ties of kinship and maintain good relations as members of society. Heavy emphasis was placed on dutifulness to parents, in particular to one’s mother (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 316). When asked about what actions God loved most, the Prophet responded with “prayer in its time” and “devotedness to parents” (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 312).

Having departed from the pagan beliefs of their ancestors, Muslims often found that their tribes and families abandoned them. Nevertheless, the Prophet instructed followers to continue to respond with goodness. When a follower inquired about how to deal with relatives that had “cut me off” and “are bad to me,” the Prophet Muhammad consoled the follower, but did not give permission to abandon the bond of kinship (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 318).

Familial ties were of such importance that the Prophet Muhammad directed followers to give precedence to one’s family and kin, “charity given to a poor person is charity, but charity given to a relative is rewarded as charity and maintaining ties of kinship” (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 332). In personal practice, the Prophet made a distinction between religious comradery and familial bonds, “I heard the Messenger of

God, may God bless him and grant him peace, speaking openly and not in secret, and he said, “The people of this tribe are not my friends. My friends are God and the righteous believers, but they have kinship with me which I keep up” (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 330). Based on analysis of the *hadith* it becomes apparent that the Prophet Muhammad initiated a new form of faith-based identity. Though this new identity was a central part of a believer’s life, it did not negate his or/her responsibility to their family and tribe.

Social responsibility. In addition to maintaining ties of kinship, the Prophet Muhammad enjoined social bonds with neighbors. The Prophet Muhammad related that, “Gabriel continued to advise me to be good to my neighbor” (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 303). It is important to note that Mecca and Medina, the cities where the Prophet resided in the sixth century, were pre-modern cities that hosted smaller populations than modern cities. As such, the command to maintain social bonds with neighbors can be interpreted as an injunction to maintain good relations with people within the city.

Believers were warned about mistreating their neighbors (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 305) and were directed to be the best neighbor they could be (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 304). Based on the first cycle of coding it became apparent that the Prophet Muhammad was constantly directing followers to be mindful of their neighbor’s needs, both physical and psychological. For example, the Prophet Muhammad advised followers to cook enough food so that it may be shared with neighbors (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 304), to give gifts to neighbors (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 310), and to not disregard their neighbor’s feelings (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 306).

The Prophet Muhammad’s emphasis on fostering a good relationship with neighbors was not delimited by faith. This serves as an important theme for educational

leaders of Islamic school in the United States because it is centered around developing social responsibility. In essence, it demonstrates a way to have a faith-based identity that is grounded in social and civic responsibility.

Preventing harm. Social responsibility focused around taking actions that would assist other in bettering their personal situation, but another aspect of having a faith-based identity was preventing harm. As part of the *ummah* Muslims now had an obligation to not engage in actions that could inadvertently harm other people.

Open marketplaces were a common feature in pre-modern Arabia. Caravans filled with goods would travel to cities to sell their goods. A common practice for traders to increase their profits was to employ a townsman to sell goods on their behalf. At times this practice could have a detrimental impact on the town. For example, when a townsman created a monopoly by representing multiple caravans or goods. The Prophet Muhammad forbade such arrangements because of the harm it entailed (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 1778). From a leadership standpoint, such an action represents a principle that can be followed in other circumstances. In another instance the Prophet Muhammad encouraged people to adopt behaviors that would prevent inadvertent harm. After a fire burned down a house in the city of Medina the Prophet Muhammad informed people that, “Fire is an enemy to you, when you go to sleep, put it out” (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 161). These *hadith*, in conjunction with other *hadith*, demonstrate that the Prophet Muhammad was concerned about the overall welfare of individuals and society.

Summary

This chapter reviewed the results from the data analysis that was conducted on a selected portion the *hadith* literature. Two core conceptual categories and their correlated

themes and properties were discussed. The Prophet Muhammad's leadership behaviors were identified and represent the virtues that he embodied. Analysis highlighted salient features of an Islamic educational leadership model that can potentially be utilized by Islamic school principals in the United States.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

The purpose of this grounded theory study was to examine the leadership behaviors of the Prophet Muhammad, and to determine what leadership model could be developed to assist principals of Islamic schools in the United States. A standard textbook of *hadith*, containing 1,896 *hadith*, was selected for data analysis. Grounded theory methods were used to analyze the data and led to the identification core conceptual categories, themes, and properties.

Results from the data led to the identification of two core conceptual categories (a) modeling and directing behaviors and (b) developing a theocentric worldview. Combined, these core conceptual categories form an emerging theory of Islamic educational leadership. In this chapter, I discuss key finding and their relationship to the current body of research, implication and limitations, and recommendations for future research.

Implications of Findings

Implication for Islamic leadership theory. Researchers have been studying leadership for decades. Though literature on the topic is continually growing, and many insights have been gained, there are still questions that remain unresolved (Harshman & Harshman, 2008). Recent scandals in the business sector have prompted many people to ask about the ethics, morals, and the character of leaders and leadership (Barlow, Jordan, & Hendrix, 2003; Cladwell et al., 2007).

The challenge in answering questions about ethics, character, and morals is the lack of a universal definition for the terms. Ethics, for example, is defined as norms of conduct that distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behavior (Resnik, 2015). Similarly, character has been defined as “doing the right thing despite outside pressure to the contrary” (Barlow et al., 2003, p. 564). In contemporary literature on leadership, ethics and morals are shaped by a worldview that “reason, and reason alone, allows the individual to step outside their own natural inclinations and act for the benefit of others” (Branson, 2007, p. 473). This belief underlies leadership theories generated in Europe and the United States.

Historically, discourse on leadership theory was developed in Europe and then in the United States (Hallinger & Leithwood, 1998). These models do not take into consideration the cultural and religious heritage of other civilizations (Hallinger & Leithwood, 1998). This is especially true within the educational context (Dimmock & Walker, 2000). Leadership models that are grounded in the Western intellectual tradition pose a problem for Muslim educational leaders trying to practice their faith.

The Islamic intellectual tradition rejects the notion of secularism that underpins Western philosophy (Chittick, 2007; Daud, 1998; Nasr, 2002). These assumptions inform leadership theory and practice (Dimmock & Walker, 2000). Results of this study indicate that the Prophet Muhammad’s leadership style was influenced by his religious beliefs. His words, actions, and way of thinking were all connected to a theocentric worldview.

From a leadership lens, the Prophet Muhammad’s “moral purpose” was clearly defined through the revelation of the Quran. Additionally, the morals adopted by the

Prophet Muhammad were not based on social customs or his personal preference. Rather, the Prophet Muhammad's morals were molded and shaped by his encounter with God. Mattson (2008) explored the connection between the Prophet Muhammad's sense of morality, pre-modern Arabian culture, and the morals dictated by God. Furthermore, she demonstrates how the Prophet Muhammad's judgments were conditioned by revelations received from the archangel Gabriel (Mattson, 2008).

Results from this study add to literature on leadership by identifying and providing analysis of the morals and ethics that guided the Prophet Muhammad's leadership style. The core conceptual categories and their related themes furnish evidence on how the Prophet Muhammad viewed the world and his interactions with people. Additionally, evidence provided in this study articulates concrete examples of moral and ethical decisions made by the Prophet Muhammad. These examples provide Muslim leaders with insight on how to align their leadership practices with the *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad.

Servant leadership and transformational leadership. Research on Islamic leadership has taken two approaches. The first approach applied preexisting leadership models to the Prophet Muhammad, and the second sought to develop an Islamic leadership model based on the Islamic tradition. This research study falls under the second category. Results from this study help to contextualize servant and transformational leadership with reference to the leadership behaviors of the Prophet Muhammad.

Servant leadership was first introduced by Greenleaf (1977), but it has been subject to refinement over the years. Table 5.1 contains characteristics taken from three models of servant leadership.

Table 5.1

Characteristics of Servant Leadership Model

Laub (1999)	Spears (2010)	Patterson (2003)
Values people	Listening	<i>Apago</i> love
Develops people	Empathy	Humility
Builds community	Healing	Altruism
Displays authenticity	Awareness	Vision
Provides leadership	Persuasion	Trust
Shares leadership	Conceptualization	Empowerment
	Foresight	Service
	Stewardship	
	Commitment to the growth of people	
	Building community	

Based on my coding of the *hadith*, there is evidence that can be utilized to demonstrate that the Prophet Muhammad exhibited traits of a servant leader. The use of grounded theory methods limited my bias and allowed a theory to emerge from the data. Results demonstrated that the Prophet Muhammad also exhibited leadership behaviors that did not conform to current servant leadership models.

A pertinent example would be in the Prophet Muhammad’s application of justice. During the coding process, some of the *hadith* mentioned the military campaigns of the Prophet Muhammad (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 161). As the categories emerged, military conflicts were subsumed within the larger theme of promoting justice. Historical accounts of the battle fought during the life of the Prophet Muhammad are well known (Watt, 1961; Lings, 1991). Scholars have debated regarding the offensive or defensive

nature of these battles (Jackson, 2002). Current models of servant leadership do not consider military conflicts or other scenarios in which a leader may have to make decisions that do not accord with the servant leadership model. Therefore, ascriptions to the Prophet Muhammad being a servant leader need to be qualified based on the situational context.

Servant leadership models are grounded in the leader being a servant to his followers (Greenleaf, 1977), whereas the Prophet Muhammad's leadership style was grounded in his servanthood to God. The battles fought in the early years of Islam were a manifestation of the Prophet Muhammad's service to God, their goal was to eliminate the oppression (Jackson, 2002).

The Prophet Muhammad's relationship to transformational leadership, in many instances, follows a similar path as servant leadership. The "four I's" have become representative of the leadership theory: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Northouse, 2013). *Hadith* can be used to substantiate that the Prophet Muhammad influenced, motivated, stimulated, and showed consideration for his followers. However, transformational leadership does not fully encompass the leadership behaviors of the Prophet Muhammad.

Dehaghani's (2014) theoretical paper on transformational leadership attempts to Islamicize the theory by basing it on the practices of the Prophet Muhammad. In his conception, he includes ideas that would be alien to non-Muslims. For example, one of the components of the model, *invitation*, refers to a transformational leader inviting people to embrace the Islamic faith. Though the concept is unique, it manipulates the

jargon of transformational leadership and places the Prophet Muhammad within its confines.

Islamic leadership models look at the leadership paradigm from a faith-based perspective. A fundamental aspect of the Prophet Muhammad's leadership behavior is, his focus on God, and the afterlife. As a leader, the Prophet Muhammad sought to motivate his followers as a means of pleasing God. As a result, Islamic leadership models combine the secular with the sacred, and provide a unique approach to leadership theory. Additional research needs to be conducted to further develop Islamic leadership theories, and researchers may find that the Islamic tradition, similar to the Western tradition, can offer multiple approaches to leadership.

Islamic educational leadership. There is a lack of agreement amongst scholars about the field of educational leadership, if educational leadership is a distinct field or if it is a subset of management studies (Bush, 2007). Bush (2007) maintains that, "While education can learn from other settings, educational leadership and management has to be centrally concerned with the purpose or aims of education" (p. 391). Furthermore, schools are complex systems that are dynamic and unpredictable (Morrison, 2008), and face unique pressures that require leaders to be adaptive (Bush, 2007). This point is especially pertinent for leaders working in Islamic schools in the United States.

The goals and objectives of Islamic schools differ from their secular counterparts. Results from the study demonstrated that one of the central functions of the Prophet Muhammad was to educate his followers and orient them towards a theocentric worldview. This was done explicitly through modeling and directing behaviors, thereby setting an example for educational leaders. Currently, Islamic leadership models do not

take into consideration the educational imperative of the Prophet Muhammad. The challenge for principals and other educational leaders within Islamic schools is understanding the educational imperatives found in the *Sunnah*, and developing leadership principles that can be used to guide their decisions. Future research can clarify the core conceptual categories identified in this study through analysis of additional *hadith*.

Sunni Islamic schools are a relatively new phenomenon in the United States, having only been in existence for a few decades (Memon, 2009). These schools both shape and adapt to macro- and micro-societal change, organizing themselves, responding to, and shaping their communities and society (i.e., all parties co-evolve). Results from this study add to the discourse of Islamic educational leadership by identifying key elements of the educational imperatives of the Prophet Muhammad, and by outlining methods he used to guide and lead his followers.

Implication of finding on identity development. In the review of literature, it became apparent that Muslims in the United States struggle with their religious and civic identities (Elannani, 2013; Clauss et al., 2013). Identity development is an evolutionary process. As individuals grow and partake in a variety of life experiences, their sense of identity is molded by those events. From a psychological perspective, identity is developed within the context of biological, psychological, and social factors (Kroger, 2007). In other words, a person's physical features, emotional influences, and historical circumstances impact their identity development. Adolescents undergo a process of identity-formation and often experience an identity crisis, a "critical turning point," that transforms the way they view themselves (Kroger, 2007, p. 207).

Identity is a complex concept that has different definitions based on discipline. Theorists agree that the “self” is not a unitary entity and should be seen as a composite (Reid & Deaux, 1996). This composite identity can be viewed through the lens of personal and social identities (Reid & Deaux, 1996). Results from this study demonstrate that the Prophet Muhammad modeled and directed followers on both types of identities.

The Prophet Muhammad encouraged his followers to develop their personal identity vis-à-vis their relationship with God. A main theme that arose from this study was *fidelity towards God and His prophet*, and a key property was *active reflection*. Active reflection manifested itself in a variety of ways, and the *hadith* reference specific practices, such as repentance and reflection, as a way to focus and develop one’s awareness of his or her identity. Interestingly, modern scholarship on leadership has identified “structured self-reflection” as a way to promote a moral consciousness among leaders (Branson, 2007). Figure 5.1 illustrates the personal identity model that can be extracted from this study.

Social identity derives from one’s membership to a larger group (Reid & Deaux, 1996). On a social level, the Prophet Muhammad defined social identity through the introduction of the *ummah*. The beliefs and customs of Muslims made them, and continues to make them, a distinct collective group. During the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad, he ordered his followers to take specific actions to identify themselves as a group. Furthermore, he guided his followers to have a sense of collective welfare. Moving forward, Muslims social identity would be framed by their Islamic beliefs.

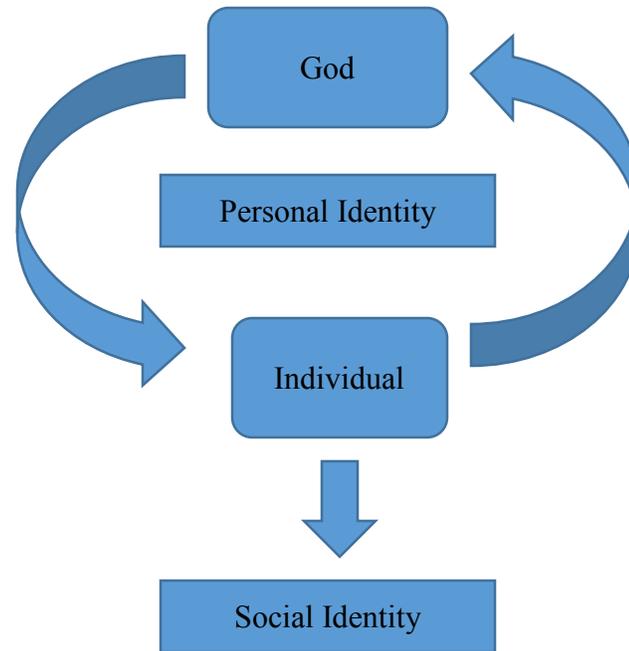


Figure 5.1. Personal identity development.

Results from this study demonstrate that there is no inherent conflict between being a part of the *ummah* and being a part of a larger community. *Hadith* from the study emphasize one’s religious bond through the *ummah* but do not indicate that it should necessitate un-civic behaviors. Rather, being a part of the *ummah* entails demonstrating civic behaviors. Themes in this study emphasized social responsibility and the prevention of harm, in a sense promoting civic engagement and common welfare.

A recurring theme in the literature on Islamic schools in the United States is the constant struggle between religious and civic identity. Civic identity is connected to the concept of citizenship. Though the term citizen was introduced during the French Revolution and applies, more properly, to nation-states, this study did not produce any reason to see citizenship as antithetical to a person’s religious identity. After the Constitution of Medina was laid down by the Prophet Muhammad, Muslims, in effect, became “citizens” of Medina (Kamali, 2009). Medina contained a diverse population,

many of whom were Jewish. Though the Prophet Muhammad took certain steps to distinguish Muslim practices from other faiths (*Riyad al-salihin*, Hadith 1636), he still advocated for cooperation for communal benefits.

Results from this study provide principals, teachers, and other individuals with an understanding of how to help American Muslims navigate their identity development through the *Sunnah*. By utilizing the *Sunnah*, educators can facilitate the development of an identity that is simultaneously true to the Islamic faith and promotes good citizenship. Muslims living in the United States face great challenges, and their loyalty to the country is often questioned. The media has polarized the subject by creating a false dichotomy of “good Muslims” and “bad Muslims” (Mamdani, 2004). Becoming a recognized and authentic part of the United States makes balancing these two identities, religious and civic, an imperative for Muslims living in the United States.

Limitations

Though the study provided valuable insight into the leadership behaviors of the Prophet Muhammad and its implications on Islamic educational leadership, there were certain limitations that should be noted. Data used in this study was drawn exclusively from *hadith* literature and does not draw on other Islamic sources. The function of the *hadith* is to preserve the words, actions, and approvals of the Prophet Muhammad but do not necessarily provide the historical context of the *hadith*. In some cases, the narrator of a *hadith* mentions the context in which the *hadith* was transmitted, but this is not generally the case. This does not detract from the quality of the data but does indicate that contextual information may provide further insights. Contextual information regarding *hadith* literature can be found in commentaries written on the *hadith* textbooks.

Given the scope and the methods used in this study, commentaries on the *hadith* were not utilized.

Another limitation of the study lies in the number of *hadith* used for analysis. The *hadith* literature is vast, with thousands of *hadith* of varying levels of authenticity. In order to increase credibility, the study examined a well-known textbook of *hadith*, *Riyad al-Salihin*. This placed a restriction on the materials that could be analyzed. Based on my reading of other *hadith* texts not used in this study, there is material that could enrich the findings from this study. Though the sample size was large enough to be representative of the *Sunnah*, utilizing other textbooks of *hadith* would be useful in expanding the topic.

Recommendations

Based on the information collected in this study, I suggest the following for future research. I recommended further investigation into the life of the Prophet Muhammad through exploration of biographical literature. Exploration of the biographical literature will help to contextualize the decision-making process of the Prophet Muhammad. Furthermore, it will provide insights into the life of the Prophet Muhammad that may help guide American Muslims in other avenues of citizenship.

My second recommendation is to analyze the Quran through an educational lens. Results from this study demonstrated that the Prophet Muhammad was consistently teaching his followers the Quran. However, there is not comprehensive study of the educational imperatives outlined in the Quran. Research in this area can have many implications for Islamic school principals whose main goal is to provide an educational environment that is in alignment with God's desires. Furthermore, results from this study

brought to light some educational objectives of the Prophet Muhammad; it would be beneficial to analyze these in correlation to the Quran. Such research would contribute to the development of Islamic educational philosophy.

My last recommendation would be to conduct research on how American Muslims navigate their dual identity. Results from this study demonstrated that Muslims' transnational identity is a part of their faith. However, a qualitative study on how American Muslims operationalize these identities would increase researchers' understanding of Muslims Americans and may provide insights into multicultural education.

Conclusion

The United States has a long-standing tradition of immigration and diversity. Muslims came to the North American continent before the establishment of the United States through voluntary immigration and forced slavery. Historical evidence demonstrates that early Muslims struggled with maintaining and preserving their faith for a variety of reasons. However, starting in the 1900s, Islam became an established reality.

African Americans were introduced to Islam through the preaching and propagation work done by the Moorish Science Temple and the Nation of Islam. These movements were part of a growing black liberation movement that sought to uplift itself from the oppression of racism and White privilege. As a result, African American Muslims established institutions that would promote and preserve their faith. Though the beliefs of the Moorish Science Temple and the Nation of Islam, in particular their beliefs about their leaders being the last prophet, place them outside orthodox Islam, they play an important role in the development of Islam in the United States. Eventually, Sunni Islam

spread through the African American community. African Americans comprise approximately 20% of Muslims in the United States, the majority, 65%, are immigrants or children of immigrants.

Muslims migrated to the United States in multiple stages, the last of which is still taking place. Since the 1970s, Muslims from the Middle East, Pakistan, India, China, and other countries have continued migrating with the hopes of a better future. Scholars have divided the Muslim community into indigenous and immigrant populations, at times noting that immigrant Muslims have generally been depicted as the voices of authentic tradition and true Islam (Jackson, 2005). Though immigrant Muslims may be seen as representative of authentic Islam, it is important to note that they are not seen as authentic Americans, and their status as Americans is often questioned. This presents a unique challenge for Muslims who have to negotiate their religious and American identity.

As the Muslim population increased, it began developing institutions to promote and preserve its religious heritage, and Islamic schools were born. Islamic schools in the United States face multiple challenges that have set them apart from their counterparts and require leaders that can negotiate the academic and religious needs of their communities. The leadership challenges posed here require an exploration of Islamic leadership, in general, and Islamic educational leadership, in particular.

Works on Islamic leadership are still developing, and there is a limited number of theoretical papers exploring the topic. There are some overlaps in the theories that have been put forth, but there is no consensus on a model. This research study was designed to add to the existing literature on Islamic leadership theory by identifying the leadership behaviors of the Prophet Muhammad. Furthermore, it sought to propose an Islamic

educational leadership model that can aid the work of Islamic school principals in the United States.

This qualitative grounded theory study adds to the current discourse by postulating a specific methodology that led to the development of an emerging leadership model. Current Islamic leadership studies identify certain traits and behaviors of the Prophet Muhammad, and they reference specific verses of the Quran or cite specific *hadith* to substantiate their claim. However, none of the studies note the methods used to identify these traits or behaviors. This study fills that deficiency by specifying the number of *hadith* used in the study, and views these *hadith* as an aggregate. By taking this approach, the researcher is able to identify broader themes and core concepts.

Using grounded theory methods to analyze a large sample size of *hadith* led to the identification of two core concepts: *modeling and directing behaviors*, and *developing a theocentric worldview*. These core concepts were connected to key themes and properties that helped to ground the emerging theory in the data. Both core concepts combined provide a framework for an Islamic educational leadership model that can aid the work of Islamic school principals.

Modeling and directing behaviors identifies specific themes and properties that demonstrate the leadership behavior of the Prophet Muhammad. These behaviors can serve as a guideline for principals of Islamic schools and help align their actions with the *Sunnah*. By implementing these behaviors, principals would be modeling and directing the behaviors of their followers, essentially creating a concentric circle of leadership. *Developing a theocentric worldview*, on the other hand, provides Islamic school principals with a representation of the educational objectives of the Prophet Muhammad

and can serve to help remedy the identity challenges faced by their students. The concepts outline a framework for viewing religious and civic identity.

Overall, this study contributes to the current research on Islamic leadership and presents an Islamic educational leadership model. The results and findings from this study can be used to guide further inquiry on the topic and can provide researchers with valuable information on how to conduct a grounded theory study of *hadith*.

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